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ABSTRACT

Presented are 17 papers and a summary from the 1974 conference on National Technical Assistance Systems in Special Education. Included are presentations by the following participants: J. Gallagher, D. Stedman, D. Lillie and T. Black, D. Davies, E. Deno, J. McCarthy, D. Jackson, K. Lundholm, J. Chalfant, R. Johnson et al., P. Mann, W. Korba, R. Podemski and J. Yates, D. Erickson, H. Bertness, D. McCarthy, and M Parrish. Among topics covered are: the structure and organization of support systems from both a theoretical and practical point of view; the functions and operations of the Technical Assistance and Development System (TADS) at the University of North Carolina; descriptions of the Learning Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, and Exceptional Children Leadership Training Institutes; experiences with a technical assistance delivery system in a Philadelphia school district; activities of the University Council for Educational Administration; and a discussion of educational support systems in the sociological context. M. Reynolds summarizes the views of conference participants on such questions as whether national technical assistance or support systems are really necessary and who should be the clients for supportive services. (LS)

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National Technical Assistance Systems in Special Education

Maynard C. Reynolds,
Editor

Report of the Conference held in
Washington, D. C.
May 29-30, 1974

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At the time of the conference, the Exceptional Child Program was an administrative part of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Systems. For encouragement and assistance in organizing this conference, I am very indebted to Edward R. Moore, Head of the Exceptional Child Program. I would also like to acknowledge the long-standing support given to the activities of the Leadership Training Institute/Special Education and to me personally by Malcolm D. Davis, formerly, Chief of the Exceptional Children's Branch, Bureau of Education Personnel Development.

Special acknowledgement is due to the staff of the LTI/SE for making both the conference and this publication possible: Nicholas Nash, Conference Coordinator; Karen Lundholm, Assistant to the Director; Sylvia W. Rosen, Technical Editor; and Bonnie Warhol, Secretary.

MCR

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PREFACE

Free, public education, in the United States, has always been conceptualized as a state and local enterprise. Although the U.S. Office of Education (initially the Bureau of Education) was established over a century ago to promote a higher standard of education in the country, it was for many years primarily a center for the collection and dissemination of information. However, with the upsurge of national interest in the improvement of the quality of education and the extension of schooling to children not previously served, as reflected in Congressional enactments, the USOE has been refashioned, in recent decades, into a major influence in American education.

In 1957, the USOE was empowered by Congress to serve as the spearhead to improve the educational opportunities for handicapped and minority group children through the establishment of programs to train leaders in special education and conduct research in teacher training, educational delivery systems, and materials. A purpose of these programs has been to plant and nurture the seeds of innovation and change along the lines mandated by federal legislation. The USOE has more recently entered many other aspects of the educational establishment; but its early investments in the field of special education has been of interest as a kind of prototype for the ways the federal government would become a more general participant with state and local educational agencies, in providing public education.

The role of the USOE in special education has expanded steadily and become a very important one, in part because the field is not well organized and, in part, because the field has been going through a period of rapid growth. The discordance between the numbers of children needing special services and the limited supply of personnel qualified to deliver the services has led the USOE to concentrate its leadership on expanding the supply and capabilities of teachers in the skills, materials, and methods of special education. This leadership has been made necessary, also, by the recent judicial and legislative actions across the country which are reflected in the mainstreaming movement. Research support, special innovative projects of various kinds, dissemination of instructional materials and support of some direct services to children have also had USOE attention and funding.

Unfortunately, the USOE has never been empowered to acquire the staff or resources needed to directly implement the intent of the Congressional, judicial, and legislative actions. In recent years, the USOE, burdened with its administrative and monitoring duties, has tended to try to mobilize the technical resources needed to do the job from among educational personnel, and this attempt has resulted in the funding of projects whose main purpose is to furnish technical assistance and other supports to other USOE programs. These technical assistance projects or systems are of especial importance in special education, first, because of the nature of the field and second,

because they may point a way for all fields of education by which the USOE can become a more effective "working partner" in the enterprises it funds. They provide, for the USOE, a means of bridging gaps that often exist between judicial and congressional intent and the inability of state and local agencies to carry out the intent on their own.

The conference on national technical assistance or support systems in special education brought together for the first time a representative group of systems personnel who are engaged in providing technical assistance on special education problems to federally funded research projects. The purpose of the conference was to explore the conceptual framework and activities of each support system, identify common problems in the delivery of technical assistance, and examine the critical aspects of support systems in general. Since the conference was designed to encourage discussions of its purpose, the formal presentations were relatively brief. Also participating in the discussions were three persons from related fields (a public school system, college of education, and mental health system) who provided objective commentaries on the proceedings. Subsequent to the conference, all of the participants prepared the papers which are presented in this report.

In relating the need for to the delivery of technical assistance in educational enterprises, Gallagher elicits some general principles for support systems which are incorporated in the two University of North Carolina technical assistance programs. On the basis of his experience with the two programs, Stedman discusses the structure and organization of support systems from both a theoretical and practical point of view. The last paper in this group, by Lillie and Black, describes the functions and operations of TADS, one of the University of North Carolina technical assistance programs.

Since the U.S. Office of Education is the primary source of funds for the special education support systems, Don Davies provides some cogent observations on the role of government agencies in relation to such systems. He also discusses the origins of the Leadership Training Institute (LTIs), which were initiated by the Bureau of Education Personnel Development under his direction, and offers guidelines for their future development. In a sense, Deno's paper covers some of the same ground as Davies's but from the viewpoint of an LTI principal. In addition, she describes a unique venture in providing technical assistance to projects funded by the BEPD which illustrates the support system capabilities of Leadership Training Institutes. The pragmatic development of the LITs and the scope of their technical assistance activities are indicated by McCarthy, Jackson, and Lundholm in their descriptions of the Learning Disabilities, Gifted and Talented, and Exceptional Children LTIs.

In discussing the need for technical assistance to solve problems in special education at the local school district level, Chalfant provides a general introduction to the big city support system

efforts described by Mann, Korba, and Johnson, Gross, Nash, and Reynolds. Mann describes the plan devised by the Technical Assistance Center at the University of Miami to mainstream handicapped students in the Norfolk (Virginia) Public School system. In analyzing his experiences with a technical assistance delivery system in a Philadelphia school district, Korba draws some conclusions relating to support systems in general. Johnson and his associates describe a coordinate status consultation model through which peers are bringing technical assistance and aiding in the organizational renewal efforts of the Boston (Massachusetts) public school system.

Rounding out the picture of special education support systems are the papers by Podemski and Yates (University Council for Educational Administration) and Erickson (SEIMC/RMC Networks). The first describes the activities of the UCEA in increasing the special education capabilities of educational administrators, and the second describes the unique venture, supported by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, of a materials support system for special educators. Both papers are examples of technical assistance which is designed to solve problems arising in special education.

The commentaries by Bertness, McCarty, and Parrish might be termed "outsiders'" views of the theory and practice of support systems, as discussed at the conference. As the Assistant Superintendent of the Tacoma Public Schools, Bertness supplies what is essentially a consumer's estimation of technical assistance and of the relationships of technical assistance and school personnel. McCarty places educational support systems in their sociological context and discusses the importance of this context for the success of any systems. A psychiatrist, Parrish brings to his observations significant insights from the fields of psychiatry and mental health which are especially relevant to persons attempting to deliver technical assistance in any context.

A concluding paper by Reynolds summarizes the conference and discusses the different concepts and problems which held the attention of the participants.

It is unfortunate that the excitement engendered by intellectual explorations cannot be translated on paper. The conference reported here was characterized by such excitement, perhaps because it was the first time people had been able to come together to discuss the technical assistance work they were doing and to exchange ideas on how and why technical assistance should be provided. It is evident from the papers that the different theories of support systems all have in common the ultimate goal of improving the educational environment to maximize the delivery of optimal services to the exceptional children in our public school systems.

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Technical Assistance and the Nonsystem of American Education

James J. Gallagher

University of North Carolina

In a recent article, Gallagher (1972) protested against the widespread but inappropriate use of the term "American educational system" in common discourse. This enterprise, which contains over 18,000 independently run school districts with over 2 million elementary and secondary school teachers and over 50 million children, actually stands as a monument of disconnected, nonsystematic operation. Such an educational enterprise, with its emphasis on local management and control and its few provisions for including outside influences, seems more appropriate to a placid agricultural past than the socially and technologically dynamic society of the present and immediate future.

How can one provide the connective tissue, the communication lines, the support systems, that will allow for the maximum movement of new ideas and skills to these diffuse entities in the minimum amount of time? That is the question of the moment. The few institutional or structural devices which have been used for communication links between school systems in the past have proven much too weak and slow moving for current circumstances.

Few people today would wish to rely upon university teacher-training programs, state departments of education, or professional and scholarly journals and books as the means to deliver new ideas and skills promptly or efficiently to the teachers and other educational personnel who provide services directly to the nation's 50 million students. Clearly, we need to explore alternative strategies. One such alternative is the design and development of a set of practices referred to as technical assistance (TA).

> Technical assistance may be defined as help from an outside agency designed to improve the competence of educational service delivery personnel by increasing their management, organizational or program skills, and/or their available information, relative to their multiple tasks of educational service delivery to students.

Although the current program manifestations referred to as technical assistance may appear innovative, the fundamental idea itself surely cannot be called new. Are we pouring old wine into new bottles? Is it just one more educational effort to dress up an old idea in new clothes? Similar strategies have been instituted many times in education before. If technical assistance is defined as outside agents' improving the competence of other persons, one might conclude that it is as old as human history itself. Socrates stands as an example of an early technical assistant, although it is

sobering to think of his eventual fate. Technical assistance probably extends back to the early cave man who gave advice from a safe distance to his colleague on how best to approach a saber-toothed tiger ("gingerly").

Other fields offer examples of technical assistance. The institution of psychotherapy is an organized and systematic attempt to provide technical assistance to citizens who have self-identified problems. In agriculture (Rogers, 1962, 1968), an involved and organized system of technical assistance has emerged which includes widespread agricultural extension services, field or county agents, and major investments in dissemination efforts. Industry has been deeply concerned with organizational improvements and has considered a number of outside attempts to encourage change in organizations through change in the individuals who inhabit them (Argyris, 1965, 1970; Friedlander & Brown, 1974).

Yet there seem to be unique elements in the new efforts at providing educational support systems which are worthy of careful consideration. These elements are not built upon the wisdom of other fields so much as on the progressive failure of earlier efforts in education. One of the common limitations of educators is that they rarely look outside their own discipline for wisdom or advice. Further, those who are very successful in doing something often do not spend much time reflecting on the reasons for the success. Thus, we are unable to use their experience to build different kinds of support systems in other settings.

The two major current efforts in the field of education can be broken down into ad hoc consultation and new organizational designs, and each is here considered separately.

Ad Hoc Consultation

School programs and administrators in all parts of the country have relied for a number of years on a variety of ad hoc consultation efforts. These efforts have been so widespread that many educators have become wandering minstrels, moving from one school system to another to pass along their stories or sets of educational wisdom. Such experts are often chosen by propinquity (perhaps a professor from a nearby college) or word-of-mouth recommendations from within the school staff itself.

Although such consultation efforts have rarely been subjected to any type of formal evaluation, satisfaction with this approach has never been high and the reasons for such limited effectiveness seem easily observable.

1. There is the issue of whether the expert's skills match the needs of the school system. He usually has a well-developed set of skills within a relatively narrow band of specialization and he is prepared to deliver that set of skills, whether that is what the system needs.

2. Such experts usually operate in a rather limited time frame that discourages serious or

sustained consultation. Often, the consultant arrives in the school district for a one- or two-day visit or workshop. He may spend a very brief amount of time orienting himself to the program and staff, make a rapid analysis of the situation, and then provide some advice on the course of action the local program should take. The problem with such an approach even with the most astute and sensitive consultant, is that any advice should be given extensive follow-up if it is to be useful and worthwhile. The consultant should be available to "troubleshoot" the results of his own advice and it is rarely possible for him to do it on a regular basis.

3. Complex human interactions are initiated in consultant relationships. It is distressing that so little attention has been paid to this dimension, since so much appears to depend upon the establishment of some form of human trust and respect as a prelude to any kind of serious transfer of information or skills. The temptation is great for a visiting expert to establish in various subtle forms clear superiority over the local staff. (E.g., he can say, "I use the Frobisher approach which I am sure you are quite familiar with," knowing full well that the clients have never heard of Frobisher in their lives. That gambit lets them know what intellectual clods they are, and discourages any overt argument, at least while the consultant is still on site.) Under such conditions there is a built-in, if disguised, resentment of the visiting expert and, consequently, not too great an inclination to follow the sponsored techniques, although great deference and respect is often shown while the expert remains.

We also need to consider more carefully the attitudes of the persons, or groups of persons, who have sought help in the first place. Do they consider a request for assistance an admission of incompetence? We tend to dislike people who symbolize our own failures. The clients, or some of them anyway, can get genuine satisfaction out of seeing the expert's ideas fall flat. We seem to assume automatically that the clients' basic motivation falls into the Maslow description of the yearning for <u>self-actualization</u> or growth, and not realize that it may be at a slightly lower Maslovian level of <u>defense</u> of existing practices rather than a reaching out for new ideas. The essence of the latter attitude is, "I do not want to be shown up or humiliated--certainly not in front of my own staff--and will resist anyone who deliberately or unintentionally manages to offend me."

Organizational Efforts

Serious educators concerned about the problems of dissemination or diffusion of new ideas and skills have recognized that some new type of delivery system or organization is required to accomplish even a minimum of important goals (Carlson, 1965; Kohl, 1969). At an earlier or more naive stage, there was hope that knowledge and skills might be distributed through a complex information dissemination system such as ERIC or MEDLARS. The federal government has always been

somewhat skittish about funding "dissemination efforts," however; it reaches out and then pulls back, for fear that it will be accused of trying to control education from the federal level, which is very much against established American tradition. Even so, despite the energies of dedicated persons, such dissemination efforts have been only minimally helpful (Gideonse, 1970). They certainly cannot be accused of generating visible educational change.

Elaborate and imaginative federal efforts to try to transmit information are apparent in organizations such as Instructional Materials Centers for the Handicapped (Moss, 1968), Regional Media Centers for the Deaf (Gough, 1968; Soeffing, 1974), the Regional Resource Centers, Leadership Training Institutes, Regional Demonstration Centers, Regional Educational Laboratories, and others. Other agencies outside the educational domain have developed Regional Medical Programs, Parent and Child Centers, and the like. It is difficult to judge the total effect of these organizations, although it seems clear that the efforts at outreach, or getting support services from the organization to the consumer, have been a problem to all. There appeared to be a centripetal force or a vortex that increasingly concentrated efforts within the organization and not in the field where the clients were.

Almost all such programs were established on the basis of some need in the educational establishment, but in grand isolation from either theory or practice in other fields, such as agriculture or industry. For example, Hagerstrand (1953, 1967) has proposed an innovative wave theory; it suggests that innovations such as changed agricultural practices occur through a complex set of face-to-face social networks at local, regional, national, and international levels. Transfers of concepts from agriculture to education need to be made with some caution, since business and agriculture are profit oriented (to note one obvious difference), but at least we should be aware of ideas in these fields.

Brickell's (1961) study of educational change processes in New York State indicated that change came through the personal demonstration of new ideas and not through standard educational channels. House, Kerins, and Steele (1972) studied program adoption in Illinois and proposed that change occurs in education when it has been pushed by an aggressive cadre of advocates who can secure adequate resources for the program and defend its integrity from attack. We can note again the personalization of contacts that result in personal changes in the client.

University of North Carolina TA Programs

If sizable problems are found in both the ad hoc consultation model and the new efforts at organizational diffusion, what is there about technical assistance that brings hope of overcoming the difficulties? Let me describe briefly some of the essential elements common to two technical assistance efforts currently operated at the University of North Carolina (Lillie, 1974; Wiegerink,

1974). One common element in the two systems is a limited and well-defined target or client group. In the case of TADS, it is the Early Childhood Demonstration Programs for Handicapped Children, supported by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, and in the case of DDTA, it is the Developmental Disability state councils for the 56 states and territories, a program administered by Social Rehabilitation Services.

Another important element in the North Carolina TA formula is that both programs are free to the client: The services are provided at no expense. That is not always the case with such systems and it could easily represent a significant difference in positive acceptance which is not shared by other assistance systems that insist on payment for services rendered.

The four elements of special emphasis in both programs are important to report. The first is a deliberate and sustained attempt at a comprehensive needs assessment of the client, whether that client is a preschool program for educating deaf children or a state developmental disabilities planning effort. Such a needs analysis provides a useful backdrop to an understanding of the client's total situation. In terms of the earlier issue of mutual trust and credibility, it provides the client with the feeling that the TA system representative is willing to spend some time listening to what the client feels is the real problem, instead of trying to present an instant and prefabricated solution.

That kind of emotional communication is one of the key elements in a helping relationship. In the field of psychotherapy, for example, many people, particularly analysts, say that nothing meaningful happens to the client before some kind of transference takes place, that is, before some kind of emotional bond is formed between the analyst and the patient. I am convinced that in education also some analogous kind of transference must take place between the client and the transmitter of information and skills before there can be any sizable modification or change in the client.

A second key element in both North Carolina programs is that the client's needs are matched with TA skills by means of a talent bank. The bank comprises a range of several hundred consultants who have special talents and skills, from lawyers and psychiatrists and special educators to family relations specialists. These advisers are available on call so that no matter what the needs of the organization being assisted, the requisite talent is in the bank somewhere to draw upon and put to use. Thus, the helper is saved from having to pretend to skills that he does not have, since the needs of the client are always much broader than the talents of the particular individual who might be trying to help. To say openly that one does not know very much about a particular problem but that one can call on some people who do, is an honest human act that can strengthen the relationship between the helper and the client. North Carolina has been fortunate in obtaining some of the best-known professionals in the country to fill the role of adviser. They have given our TA efforts instant professional credibility in the field.

A third unique feature of the North Carolina TA programs is the establishment of a written contract between the TA provider and the clients. Such a formal contract has served numerous useful purposes: It provides the client and the helper with a clearly specified set of objectives. It places a time limit on the nature of the assistance and specifies the amount of assistance to be delivered. It provides a built-in accountability and an easy means of checking to what degree the agreed-upon services were delivered.

The contract serves another very positive function to the technical assistance programs. In informal consultations there is an often-observed phenomenon of constantly rising expectations on the part of the clients. The more service that is delivered, the more is expected; the client tends to forget what the expected level of help was at the beginning of the contract. A written record in the form of an initial contract helps to remind everyone involved of the original relationship and the agreed-upon boundary lines for the assistance. Of course, such a contract cannot describe the quality of the service nor its impact on the client; consequently additional procedures are clearly needed to evaluate a TA operation.

The fourth and most difficult element is the need to establish an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect between TA systems and clients. Argyris (1970) discussed at some length the problems of trust between client and innovator in industry, and the issues are also pertinent in education. A TA system must pay close attention to the client and his stated needs; must respect the client's views on the priority of problems, as opposed to the technical assistant's notions; and must follow through on the request for services with sustained and, in most instances, person-to-person contact.

Such a strategy would fit well with Havelock's (1971) findings in his review of change-agent models. He identified some of the major characteristics of one type of helping model that tends to coincide with the technical assistance model in common usage today:

1. The user is the starting place.
2. Diagnosis precedes solution identification.
3. The outside helping role is nondirective.
4. Internal resources are important.
5. User-initiated change is the strongest.

House (1973) questioned the assumptions and utility of this approach. He suggested that the outside influence is still dominant in the model although it may appear user oriented. Nevertheless, the model is identifiable and we generally ask, Who is in charge of the help? It is being delivered from an outside source that has some major responsibilities to deliver something to somebody, or can the client call upon it or not, as s(he) desires?

One way to look at the type of technical assistance that is being offered here is that it generally represents variations rather than reorientations (see Normann, 1971). Variations are

small-scale changes that can be accommodated within existing systems, while reorientation may cause a major power shift internally or externally. In most instances, the technical assistance described here does not threaten those who hold power.

In reviewing the Plowden report on British primary schools, Featherstone (1968) made an interesting comment on some of the useful innovations in British education. Their progress seemed to him to be akin to the TA program described here:

> There is another element that seems to be equally important although we in America have very little understanding of how it works. This is the emergence of a class of people whose precise function is vague... the government inspectors who in recent years have stopped playing the role of educational policemen in charge of enforcing standards and instead have become advisors, agents for disseminating change and identifying good schools and willing teachers.... local authorities have set up similar groups, either formally or informally: in some cases the work of local inspectors has taken on an advisory character, and a few exceptional authorities have set up advisory offices with teams of teachers whose sole responsibilities are to encourage and train other teachers and interest them in trying out new ideas. (Featherstone, 1968, pp. 326-327)

Who Shall Deliver Technical Assistance?

Among the fundamental questions involving technical assistance are (a) who should deliver it? and (b) who should pay for it? The current leadership training and TA programs are being operated out of grants and contracts provided by funding agencies to a particular unit committed to delivering the special service. This arrangement leads to a number of problems that have not been sufficiently recognized, such as a tendency for agency and TA programs to vie for the affections of the client group.

A frequent question is, Should not the state or federal agency that is supporting an effort provide such technical assistance from its own staff? One obstacle is the agency's chronic limitation of personnel so that it seldom has sufficient people to provide the broad range of technical assistance required. Agencies could nevertheless establish talent banks, as existing TA systems have done.

Another more serious drawback to such agency assistance involves a question of policy and problems that might arise from a mix of monitoring and helping responsibilities. In the field of counseling or psychotherapy, the counselor's basic responsibilities are clearly assumed to lie with the client rather than with the employing institution, and only under the most serious personal threat is the bond of confidentiality between counselor and client broken. Also, the technical assistance person, counselor, or therapist, is rarely in a line or authority position in the organization; he stands off to one side while he provides assistance and help.

Further, the helping relationship involves a mutual respect and trust which may not be compatible with the monitoring role. It is easy to see that a local program whose existence may depend upon the favorable reaction of a supporting state agency will not likely bare its soul to the

agency representatives in a needs assessment or in a statement of problems. Therefore, it is probably wise to suggest that if any sizable aspect of the agency's role in the program involves monitoring the program or decision making on its future, the monitoring responsibilities should be separated from the technical assistance. In other situations, however, where the agency has no particular life or death decision-making power over the programs, restrictions or problems would not exist in such strong form. We are probably not wise enough in the use of these support systems to draw any general restrictions or rules that fit all cases, but it seems clear that one should be particularly careful in mixing the helping and monitoring relationships.

Some general principles that seem to fit many TA programs can be identified (Gallagher, 1973):

1. Communication for change works best when the individual requesting change, or who is expected to change, has a major say in the nature of the change itself. In other words, the person who is to be affected by the assistance should have the power in the situation to determine what elements are to be changed and under what circumstances. Although there can be a counter argument that the expert knows better than the client what needs to be changed, this approach would violate the conditions of mutual trust and respect between the client and the helper.
2. Communication for change works when there is a common language between helper and helped. A very real attempt must be made by the technical assistance system to speak in the language of the client. This requirement is stiff for many professionals who have become used to their own jargon and quite unused to the tedious translation process necessary. It hardly needs pointing out, but the professional jargon is one of the standard, and not so subtle, ways of establishing one's superiority over the person who does not know how to use it.
3. Communication for change works best when the message does not contradict the basic values of the receiver. It should be clear in a parent-training program that a technical assistance effort that tries to urge the parent into procedures antithetical to her/his basic value system, will not stand much chance of succeeding. One can easily imagine the fate of the technical assistance program that tried to bring a permissive parent philosophy into an authoritarian-style family without massive preparation.

Even these general principles may be incorrect; they are certainly incomplete. What general truths do we have that can aid others in designing support systems?

The Future of Technical Assistance

If anything is clear, it is that our conception of the proper role of support systems, such

as technical assistance, is in a constantly changing state. In 10 years, our operations will be very different from what they are now. Change does not necessarily mean improvement, and the question for us is how to accomplish change constructively. As Kurt Lewin (1951) commented: "To find out what one would like to know, one should in some way or another already know it (p. 3)." Nevertheless, there are three relatively clear directions in which we should move.

The first is a comprehensive and sustained effort to research or evaluate the impact of the various TA systems. Such evaluation is extraordinarily complex and more difficult than standard research. An offhand contract to an outside consulting firm may yield results that are worse than nothing. The methodology and conceptualizations of evaluation should be given special attention, which, in turn, requires fiscal resources. Recently, we have tried to do some case study interviews of TADS clients to get at some of the dimensions of impact, and the initial results were quite encouraging. Again, we need to draw upon other fields, such as industry, for research techniques that have been found effective.

We can also help by putting ourselves under the microscope and asking what it is that we are doing in a reserach and evaluation sense that seems to have impact. We all have a gut feeling about what it is, and that gut feeling should be respected. The intelligent observations of people who have lived in a system for 2, 3, or 4 years are enormously valuable; even if they cannot be easily quantified, they should still be listened to.

A second direction is to consider the nature of training: How do we prepare people to provide support services or technical assistance? For his educational "bucket brigade," Stedman (1973) proposed three specific functions which he labeled dippers, shuttlers, and throwers. The dippers synthesize past knowledge and translate it into knowledge that is useful to the client; the shuttlers are able to get the knowledge to the place where it needs to be applied; and the throwers are adept at the process of inserting it in the local system. The dippers, shuttlers, and throwers need not be three separate persons, but the roles are distinct and need to be thoroughly understood and demonstrated in any type of training program for support personnel. We also need to support a variety of alternative training models that will provide more direct expertise for these roles than is now available. The stress on the person-to-person relationships suggests that such a program would draw more heavily on the personal dynamics area for training skills than has been common in many educational programs.

Finally, we need demonstrations of a variety of support systems in many different educational settings. How about a TA system to deliver services in a major metropolitan area? in dispersed geographic areas such as the western and southeastern states? for day care and preschool programs such as Headstart?

We know that we can no longer exist in isolated educational units, but we do not wish to become

small wheels in a huge and cumbersome national education machine, either. So we must move carefully and evaluate comprehensively, in order to move from our comfortable isolated past to our complex interrelated future without being captured by a large bureaucratic structure that may turn out to be unresponsive to its members.

In the end, I suppose true freedom is possible only for the competent, individually and collectively. An increase in educational communication does not necessarily mean a move toward educational tyranny or centralized control. Increasing the power of the system to perform at all levels, but particularly at the end point--the delivery of education to the child--must continue to be the ultimate criterion by which these systems are judged.

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The Technical Assistance System: A New Organizational Form for Improving Education

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The recent flurry of interest which has led to the establishment of leadership training institutes, technical assistance systems, learning resource centers, and other educational support systems has caused us to look closely at the similarities and differences among these organizations and at their possible relation to a generic form which might yield some common principles and guidelines for their development and function.

The Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has two technical assistance systems, the BEH-supported Technical Assistance Development System (TADS), serving a network of over 125 demonstration preschool intervention programs for the handicapped, and the RSA/DDD[1]-supported Developmental Disabilities Technical Assistance System (DD/TAS), that serves the 56 state and territorial Governors' Planning and Advisory Councils on Developmental Disabilities. This paper is the result of my involvement in the development and operation of the two projects and of observations of others; it should be regarded as a set of ideas extrapolated from my experience and that of others.

A technical assistance system is an organization with unique structural and functional characteristics. The purpose of the TA system is to transfer information from one place to another. It is a network between at least two other organizations. It relies heavily on the creativity, endurance, and advocatory posture of its membership.

A technical assistance (TA) system is most properly viewed as a communications network. Members initiate and maintain communication around specific problems and about strategies to solve the problems. Everything in the technical assistance system is directed toward the initiation and maintenance of this communication. The structure and function of the system are partly determined by the content or information the system is appointed to deliver, partly by the characteristics of the "customers," or client organizations, and partly by the character and style of the technical assistance organization's membership. Thus it is a constantly changing organization. Three major areas of the technical assistance organization are considered here: (a) structure and organization; (b) organizational function and external interactions; and (c) membership and internal dynamics.

[1]Rehabilitation Services Administration/Division of Developmental Disabilities.

Technical Assistance System Structure and Organization

The basic components of a TA system are a set of closely interaction content areas that include program planning and evaluation, information and media, organizational development, critical content areas (curriculum information on handicapped children, legislative and legal information, and the like), and resource development. These closely interacting components require unique staffing characteristics--persons who are well trained and experienced in specified areas and who can perform administration-communications roles in the overall outreach and technical assistance delivery activities of the system. The components must be augmented by a talent bank or human resources network of part-time consultants from a variety of specialty areas if the special needs that may arise from the interaction between the TA system and its client organizations are to be met. The central leadership of the system requires good internal planning, budgeting, and program implementation supports to assist the component staff members in the development and successful completion of the TA system. Figure 1 shows the relation of the components to the whole of a TA system.

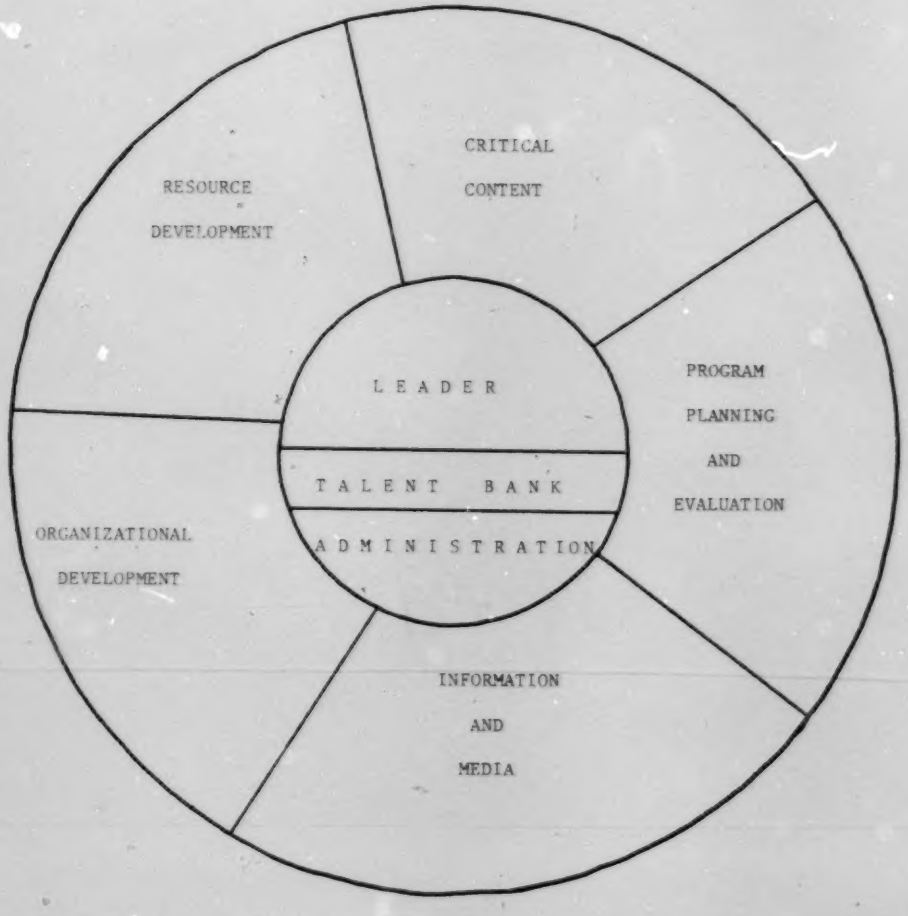


Figure 1. Technical Assistance System.

Although some organizational characteristics of the TA system are determined by the structures within the client organization, others are determined by structural relations between the client organizations and the TA system. Pre-existing intermediary structures may require not only a special technical assistance organizational design but also specialized procedures. Particular attention should be given to this aspect of technical assistance system design.

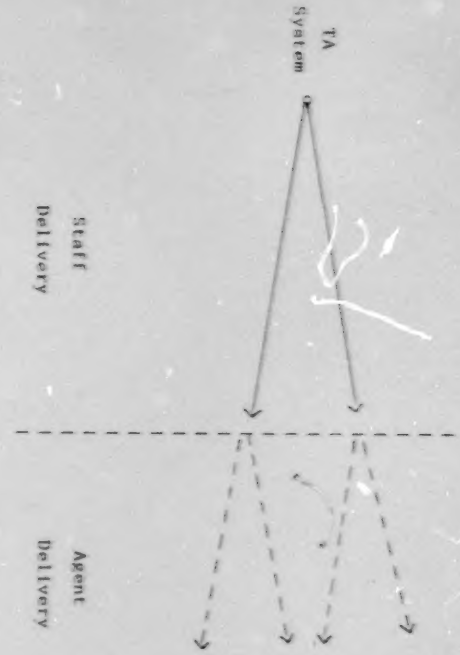
The structure and function of an effective organization combine and balance in (a) the design to implement strategies for specific goals and objectives and (b) the design to accommodate, adapt, and/or adjust to political and logistical features of the landscape on which the organization must operate. A great deal of time and effort is normally spent on the first aspect--the "internal locus of control" features. However, not enough time is spent on the second aspect--the "external locus of control" features. This failure is common in organizational design, especially in TA systems, and it may build in an initial defect which is as detrimental to the organization as poorly designed goals and objectives.

Characteristics of the client or client organization to be served are of paramount importance in organizing a technical assistance delivery system, but equally important are alternative strategies for delivering any type of technical assistance to any type of client. A basic consideration is the communications that should be set up and implemented to deliver technical assistance effectively, which, in turn, relates to the absence or presence of existing structures in or around the client organizations. The decision is essentially between two alternatives: whether to develop and deliver technical assistance through a brokerage function or to develop technical assistance directly from the TA systems staff. Of course, combinations are possible, but an examination of the two extremes may help to clarify the alternatives and pose the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Since, currently, many types of organizations are generating the capability for or are already engaged in the development and delivery of technical assistance, these alternative principles for the initial design of TA systems seem important. Figure 2 outlines alternative TA systems design according to two basic strategies, (a) a proximal TA system design and (b) a distal TA system design.

In the proximal TA system, the bulk of the technical assistance is developed and delivered by the TA system's staff. In the distal TA system, the technical assistance is delivered by consultants or technical assistants who are identified and mobilized by the TA system's staff.

The proximal TA system design offers the advantage of more control over both staff and content of the technical assistance delivered. It insures a lower risk of overextending the TA system's resources or of distorting the products of needs assessment as they are conveyed to the central staff of the TA system and converted into technical assistance actions. The proximal system is less costly since it provides for more effective economic controls and budgetary management, which help to contain expenditures of time and dollars by maintaining a less complicated and lower "velocity" activity within the TA system itself.



	Advantages	Disadvantages
Proximal	More control Lower "risk" Less costly Higher client specialization	Slow delivery per client "Biased" TA Tiring to staff Constricted spectrum of services
Distal	Randomized bias Fast delivery More coverage/per day/per client Broader spectrum of services	More costly Higher "risk" Less control Complicated communications

Figure 2. Alternative TA Systems Designs.

The disadvantage of the proximal system is that technical assistance is delivered more slowly to clients because fewer technical assistants are available at any given time. Also, the chance of technical bias is greater when fewer competencies are available in a relatively closed system staff; and a given client is less likely to receive an individualized form of consultation. In addition, the staff of a proximal design system tend to deplete their energy and resources by the large amount of travel and other liaison and communication activities which are necessary to meet client's needs. Finally, a TA system confined to delivery by its own staff members is necessarily constricted in the spectrum of services it can provide because of staff availability.

The distal TA system design offers the advantages of reduced and randomized bias through a more careful matching of consultant-to-client needs by one or more staff members of the central TA systems staff. In addition, faster delivery is possible because of client need not wait for the availability of a central staffer. A consultant from the talent bank can be located and delivered

to the client with reasonable speed and efficiency. More coverage per day per client or client organization can be provided by the distal system since the brokerage system makes more short-term consultants and technical assistants available than does a small central staff. A broader spectrum of services is also possible through the brokerage method as it operates in a fashion that permits the more precise location of competencies that can meet the client's needs. The more constructed spectrum of services inherent in the centralized staff delivery method does not permit such precision.

Disadvantages are found in the distal method, however. It can be more costly in terms of both money and error rate through the possible mismatch of consultant and client, lower manageability or maintenancy of consultant fee schedules, or inadequate referrals by a third party of a "top consultant." The distal system offers a higher risk in that not so much can be known about consultants who are located and deployed at a distance, unlike the firsthand knowledge that is possible of a central staff. Finally, the distal system provides less control; agencies operating at a distance from the central staff may be less inclined to follow the procedures set up by the central staff as efficiently as might be desirable. Distal system communications become more complicated as well.

Table 1 indicates some guidelines for determining which system, proximal or distal, should be used under which circumstances. The proximal TA system design is desirable and more feasible when formal structures, such as regional offices, state agencies, special interest groups, or other parent or linked organizations with the client organization do not exist. When the TA system is operating close to the customer, as with direct service programs, the proximal system is more desirable.

Table 1

Guidelines on the use of Proximal and Distal TA Systems

WHEN TO USE WHICH TA SYSTEM

Proximal	Distal
No formal structures in field	Formal structures in field
Client close to customer (service program)	Client remote from customer (planning program)
Controlled development rate possible	Need for speed of delivery
Quality required	Need for quantity
No talent bank available	Talent bank available
Fewer clients	Many clients
Low budget	Budget adequate

Where the TA system must be developed rapidly to meet the needs of planned or existing client organizations, a proximal system may be more desirable. If quality of technical assistance is of greater relative importance than quantity, a proximal system with a stable ongoing central staff is probably more desirable than a distal system.

The proximal system is probably the only recourse when no talent bank or human resources network system exists or only a small number of competent people is available in a given technical field. If the number of clients is small enough so that the central staff has no difficulty in providing quick and quality assistance to them a proximal system suffices. Finally, if the TA system must operate on a low budget, the budgetary control and features of a small central staff argue for a proximal system as opposed to a more expensive distal one.

The distal system is more desirable and even necessary when there are formal structures in the field with which the technical assistance system must develop offensive or defensive communications and liaison, the client is remote from the customer (as in a planning and advising organization), technical assistance must be delivered speedily and in great quantity, a human resources network or talent bank is feasible to develop and can be afforded, or clients outnumber central staff members.

This attempt to distinguish between a proximal and a distal design in the development of TA systems does not preclude combinatory or intermediary designs. Each form must be closely examined in the field to extrapolate with greater reliability its advantages and disadvantages. However, those venturing for the first time into the design and development of new TA systems should keep in mind the fundamental distinction between the two designs.

The Organizational Function and External Interactions

The technical assistance cycle (needs assessment-technical assistance strategy development-technical assistance delivery-technical assistance evaluation) is discussed extensively elsewhere and needs little attention here. However, this cycle leads to some special organizational functions and external interactions of the TA system which are important to consider, such as liaison, information dissemination, training or capacity building, and interdiction.

Liaison

The successful completion of the technical assistance cycle requires not only that a contact be developed and maintained with the client organization but that there be developed and maintained liaison with other organizations related to the TA system and to the client organization. Such liaison often ensures the effectiveness of needs assessment and technical assistance delivery. Liaison is of the utmost importance with the parent organization of the client, the parent organization of the technical assistance system, concerned or interested organizations and individuals, and professional or special interest group organizations. If technical assistance is viewed, or allowed to be construed,

as a clandestine operation, then its delivery is frustrated, distorted, or prevented.

Information dissemination

The dissemination of information on the TA system, the goals and objectives of the client organizations, the members of the TA system, and, often, the agency or organization funding the system, is an important activity. It helps to clarify the intentions and operations of the TA system, increase the visibility and morale of its staff members, provide credibility to the operations, and sanction the client organization's engagement with the TA system.

Training or capacity building

It is often necessary to train members of the client organization in how to use technical assistance before such assistance can be delivered. Also, some client organizations have "part-time members," such as consumers, whose level of information and knowledge must be improved or updated before successful needs assessment and technical assistance delivery can take place. Thus, TA systems staff members are required to engage in direct training or capacity-building activities prior to the establishment of the technical assistance delivery cycle as well as during the technical assistance delivery phase.

Interdiction

In response to special inquiries about the TA system and its activities, intentions, and effectiveness, the TA system must be prepared to communicate sporadically and informally with the client organization and its key leadership as well as with other individuals and organizations relating to the client organization. The TA system must be able to respond to special informational requests and to issue special information, such as publications, bulletins, and other reports. In order that TA system operations continue successfully, the system must constantly update and clarify the information it supplies to potential and actual client organizations as well as members of the talent bank or human resources network. The communication should always be as personalized as possible.

In summary, the TA system must develop and maintain effective intersystem communications with the parent organization of the client, the client organization, the parent organization of the TA system, the funding agency of the TA system, the funding agency of the client organization, "agents" of the TA system, client "competition," other client support systems, and other related formal and informal structures. In other words, major attention must be given to the communications and liaison aspects of the TA system's activity. It may be costly in time and budget but it must be done if the TA system is to be effective.

The Technical Assistance System Membership and Internal Dynamics

Important to the effective functioning and credibility of the TA system is the inclusion of an advisory council or board. This advisory council should be made up of competent and highly visible

members of the critical content area. They should interact frequently with the leadership of the TA system and guide the organization in its development and operations. Council members may also be members of the TA system's human resources network or talent bank. Both TADS and DD/TAS have found such an advisory council to be immeasurably helpful at both the policy and operational levels.

Some additional special features also need highlighting. The TA system staff must be populated by both process oriented and product oriented personnel so that the TA system staff will have almost always a variety of leadership and operational styles in the determination of policy or operational issues. The needs assessment phase of the technical assistance cycle is actually the beginning of technical assistance to the client organization. It requires process oriented staff members as well as product developers who can follow through on the product delivery necessities in technical assistance strategy development and technical assistance delivery. Maintenance of liaison and the evaluation of technical assistance operations and technical assistance effectiveness require both kinds of personnel. The leadership of the TA system, while consciously acquiring these diverse skills, must be careful to orchestrate the staff and maintain a higher level of interaction in decision making within the organization than might be usual with most organizations.

Since the TA system is a renewal system and advocates change, its members must be advocates for the consumer group served by the client organization; they must care more about the consumer population than one might ordinarily expect of the members of a consulting group in relation to the client or the client's consumers.

In their operations, TA systems consciously violate a basic principle of consultation, that is, they attempt simultaneously to establish a trust relationship with the client and to change the client's behavior. Ordinarily these two activities should be sequenced, first the establishment of the trust relationship and <u>then</u> the behavior modification or behavior change activity. To carry out the two activities simultaneously requires experienced, sensitive, process oriented staff members, and they may cause some special problems in the evaluation of technical assistance effectiveness.

It is critical that the turnover of a TA system's staff be as low as possible. In either a proximal or distal design, the establishment of a personal acquaintance between staff members and client organization membership can increase the effectiveness of TA operations; an interruption of this continuing relationship and communication pattern can disrupt and reduce the effectiveness of TA activities.

The timing of TA delivery is also very important. A rapid response to a call for help is paramount, even if the help is not particularly effective. Therefore, the tempo and flexibility of TA system staff are critical.

Although the contract relations between the TA system and the client organization must be as

specific and sequenced as possible, it is important for staff members to avoid an overly legalistic approach to technical assistance delivery. Such an approach can cause the client organization to overemphasize the technical assistance "contract" at the expense of the flexibility needed to change and modify technical assistance activities, as the client organization grows and changes.

Finally, it is important not to change the operational pattern of the TA system frequently or drastically; nevertheless the leadership must frequently inject novelty into the operational style of the TA system to stimulate the staff to function at continuing high levels of competency.

Summary

The technical assistance system has been characterized as a communications network linking delivery systems and production organizations, such as research and development centers and organizations dealing directly or indirectly with consumer populations. A basic set of componerts appears to be required for all effective TA systems. However, the specific organizational configuration of a TA system is modified by the nature of the content delivery, characteristics of the client organization, and other organizations and structures which exist within and between the TA system and its client organization. Some special considerations for TA systems design selection and operations are offered, and observations and suggestions gained from experience with two successful TA systems are drawn upon to support the point of view that indeed the TA system is a unique organization requiring careful development and operation.

TADS--A Systematic Support System

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The Technical Assistance and Development System (TADS) was established in July 1971 by the U.S. Office of Education to assist the development of Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP). HCEEP was authorized by Congress in 1969 and is administered by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH). The purpose of TADS is to provide comprehensive and systematic support to HCEEP through the delivery of informational and consultative resources. TADS is located at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

TADS's Clients

Under the Handicapped Children's Early Education Program (HCEEP), grants are made to public and private nonprofit agencies for the development and implementation of model programs to demonstrate high-quality services for young handicapped children. In order to assure that each model center develops an exemplary program, several requirements are placed on the program design and project activity: (a) The program must emphasize parental and family involvement. (b) The program must provide a component stressing the areas of special education and child development in early childhood education. (c) The model centers are expected to develop procedures for evaluation of project efforts. (d) The program must have an impact on the community, region, or state in the development of new, quality services for young handicapped children.

Rationale for Organizational Structure

Since the major mission of any support system is to assure that the client programs, whether specialized projects or large monolithic school systems, reach their goals efficiently, the technical assistance must be organized in such a manner that it can be responsive to the goals of its client system. Therefore, the organization and administration of a support system depends to a large degree on the organization and goal directiveness of its client system.

As indicated in Figure 1, client systems can fall anywhere along a continuum of goal directiveness, from single purpose/concentrated goals to multiple purpose and diffused goals. In the field of special education, potential client systems for technical assistance can be placed along this

continuum. Special purpose programs, such as HCEEP, the Regional Deaf/Blind Program, and the Title III-Learning Disability Program, all fall toward the single purpose/concentrated end of the continuum of goal directiveness. Each program, to be sure, has multiple goals. However, the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped in each instance has established fairly well delineated guidelines specifying the area of activities within the programs. Each system also has a fairly concentrated target group: deaf/blind children, learning disabled children, early childhood education for the handicapped.

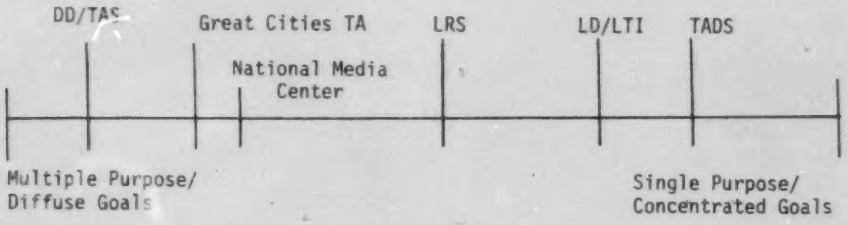

Figure 1. Goal directiveness/support systems.

At the other end of the continuum would be a total special education program within a school system, or a special education department within a state education agency. The goals of these multipurpose organizations are often nondescript and diffuse. In addition, the programs across similar organizations may be dissimilar. For example, the program emphases of and goals for the special education program in the California State Agency may be quite different from those in the Virginia State Education Agency.

When the goal directiveness of the client system is concise and concentrated, the support system serving it can be organized and structured around the clear-cut set of program goals. The technical assistance delivery system can be systematic and specific, concentrating on the preciseness and comprehensiveness of services delivered. On the other hand, if the client organization presents multiple goals and nonsimilarity from client to client, the technical assistance system must be organized to maximize flexibility in the delivery of services, and it must possess the capabilities to respond quickly to a miltiplicity of needs.

It is interesting to note that other support systems in the field of special education in the country today can be placed on the continuum in Figure 1. The National Media Center at Ohio State probably falls toward the miltiple purpose end of the continuum in that its clients are diffuse and perhaps dissimilar. The new network of Learning Resource Systems(LRS) might fall more within the center of the continuum in that they have a finite set of clients, that is, state education agencies in their region. On the other hand, if the workscope of the LRS is not definitive and it purports to be responsive to all special education needs within a state agency, the goal directive-

ness would become more diffuse, which then has an effect on how the support system should be organized and the extent to which technical assistance can be structured into a systematic delivery system.

In response to the goal directiveness of its client system (HCEEP Network), TADS has developed a systematic technical assistance delivery process which is appropriately responsive to its clients' needs. Since we have not been working with a client system that has multiple purposes with multiple and diffused goals, we leave the discussion of how to organize and deliver technical assistance to such clients to the appropriate technical systems, such as the Development Disability Technical Assistance System and and Great Cities Technical Assistance Program.

The TADS Technical Assistance Process

During its first three years of operations (1971-1974), TADS has developed and used extensively a systematic procedure for the delivery of technical assistance. Figure 2 provides a graphic illustration of this system.

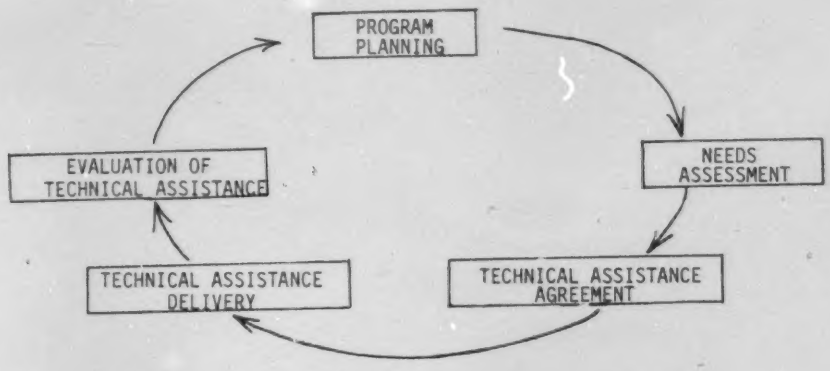

Figure 2. TADS technical assistance cycle.

Five sequential stages are applied to each program choosing to enter a technical assistance cycle.

1. Delivery begins with assisting the program to develop a program plan emphasizing well-articulated goals and objectives.
2. An assessment is made of the program's technical assistance needs as the program plan is pursued.
3. A technical assistance agreement is developed between the program requesting assistance and TADS, in which the technical assistance to be delivered is specified.
4. Technical assistance is delivered through a variety of procedures.
5. Feedback and evaluation of the effectiveness of the assistance delivered are collected.

Program Planning and Needs Assessment

The technical assistance cycle begins with program planning because the needs assessment procedure is based on the individual client program's statements of goals and measurable program objectives. If these statements are missing or are not expressed in clear, precise language in the existing program plan, the assistance must first clarify them.

The initial stage of program planning involves a comprehensive review of the client's total program for the coming year. The outcome of this review is a Program Plan Outline, written in the format presented in Table 1. It addresses the program's targets, goals, outcome objectives, activities, and evaluation procedures. The goal statement is the basis for the description of the activities as well as the evaluation procedures.

Table 1

Program Plan Outline for

MIDTOWN, U.S.A.

TA.MOST	GOAL	OUTCOME OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION
E.D. children 3-5 years	1. To provide comprehensive services for 3-5-year-old E.D. Children through a model educational and therapeutic program.	1.1 By the end of FY-74, 80% of the project children will improve in language development as measured by standardized instruments.	1.11 Each child will be administered individualized training sessions based around weekly objectives.	1.1 The ITPA will be administered on a pre-post test basis.
			1.12 Individual programs will be monitored on a weekly basis.	1.2 The children functioning below ITPA will be evaluated on weekly pre-Distar and Distar objectives.
			1.13 By the end of FY-74, the project will have sequenced communication skills through first grade.	1.2 The number of children achieving this objective will be enumerated for each month of child intervention.
		1.2 80% of the project children will achieve a minimum of 1 social relations objective per month as identified by project staff.	1.21 Each child will be administered individualized training sessions based around weekly objectives.	
			1.22 Individual programs will be monitored on a weekly basis.	
			1.23 By the end of FY-75, the project will have listed behaviors and teaching strategies for social relation skills up to first grade.	

The Program Plan Outline is only an "outline" of the center's program. It deals primarily with high-priority areas of the program which are essential to its success and/or difficult to implement. Program Plan Outlines are produced at varying levels of sophistication, but even the more primitive ones are useful in planning for technical assistance. The process of reviewing the client's total program and preparing the Program Outline is a valuable piece of technical assistance itself. It often provides the one and only time the leadership and implementation staffs take a long, hard systematic look ahead at what they are trying to accomplish. It helps make their mission clear and provides perspective for their various program components.

Needs Assessment

The needs assessment stage is linked very closely to the program review process and occurs simultaneously, to some extent. As each component of the project is reviewed and outcome objectives are identified, the client is always asked, "Will you need technical assistance in order to reach that objective or to reach it more effectively?" If the answer is yes, a technical assistance need has been discovered. Thus, by the end of the program review a list of technical assistance needs has also been formulated.

The process of program planning and needs assessment occurs between the client staff and the representative(s) from TADS, most often at the client's site, and it involves advance preparation by both sides. This on-site visit has three purposes:

1. To specify a list of programmatic needs.
2. To determine general needs of the program for purposes of future planning and technical assistance delivery.
3. To initiate personal relationships with the program personnel leading to mutual trust and respect, which, in turn, will help facilitate changes in the program and staff.

During the first year of TADS' operations, an on-site needs assessment visit was made during October and November to each of the first- and second-year HCEEP centers. These on-site visits were conducted primarily by TADS advisors and consultants. A meeting was held to familiarize the needs assessors with the general objectives of the needs assessment and to develop, with their advice, the needs assessment procedures. As a result of that meeting, an "interview kit" was designed to assure continuity and reliability between interviews. It included information about the specific center to be visited, an outline of the general interview format, a rating form and instructions for its uses, and a form for listing the priority of needs. This packet specified the information which TADS needed to collect from the interview. The TADS Advisors were also asked to make subjective comments and to collect samples of materials which the centers had prepared, such as newsletters, reports and brochures, and lists and samples of evaluation instruments, for the TADS library.

Early in December 1971 the TADS Advisors met for a "debriefing" on the needs assessment activities.

They recounted their experiences and impressions of the model centers and presented the data which they had collected. As the result of this meeting, strategies were developed for delivering technical assistance to the individual client centers for the remainder of the fiscal year. In addition, the needs assessment provided the basis for a network needs assessment report. Furthermore, this process enabled TADS to establish personal contact with each client center, which led to relationships of mutual trust.

As TADS moved into its second year of operations, a new technical assistance cycle was initiated. For the HCEEP centers just funded, and orientation conference was conducted; its purpose was to acquaint the new center directors with the dimensions of the tasks that lay ahead of them in planning, developing, and operating a successful model center. The conference also served as an orientation to TADS and the technical assistance process.

Experiences during our first year of operation revealed the need for some changes in the needs assessment procedures. Accordingly, the needs assessment format was modified for 1972-73, both in terms of content and the procedures which were followed. We decided to telescope the needs assessment and technical assistance agreement writing phases into a much shorter time span.

To accommodate this change, the technical assistance agreement writing was made the last task of the needs assessment site visit. Again the TADS Advisors were deployed to perform the needs assessments. As part of the site visit, the needs assessor developed a tentative technical assistance agreement which was then reviewed by the TADS staff, modified if needed, and adopted.

Because the number of needs assessment and technical assistance agreements grew larger during the second and third years as a result of network growth, TADS staff members were used more extensively for needs assessments and agreement writing. Table 2 presents the number of needs assessments conducted during the first three years of TADS.

Table 2

Needs Assessment by Year and Type

Type	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
On-Site Assessment	44	29	65
Off-Site Assessment	0	37	10
Total	44	66	75

For the second year, the content of the needs assessment interview was lengthened to provide for a more structured basis from which questions related to needs might be raised. During the third year the needs assessment interview process and kit were further refined to include an information questionnaire, a Program Plan Review Guide (used in developing the Program Plan Outline and list of needs), the TADS Mart (a description of the various technical assistance services of TADS), and Guidelines for Writing Technical Assistance Agreements.

As Table 2 illustrates, the settings of the needs assessment activities were moved from the first-year cycle to the third-year cycle. This change was logical because we were quite familiar with many of the centers, especially those in their second and third year of funding, and we did not need the site visit to establish ourselves with the center personnel or to become familiar with their programs, facilities, and resources.

Technical Assistance Agreements

To facilitate the technical assistance process, a procedure for developing a technical assistance agreement with each model center was established. A technical assistance agreement is a written plan that specifies the technical assistance needs of the project, the technical assistance outcome objectives, the technical assistance actions taken by TADS and the center, and the technical assistance evaluation plans. Table 3 shows an example taken from a technical assistance agreement.

There were several basic purposes for establishing a formal system for the agreement between TADS and the model centers for services to be provided: (a) To provide a concise, clear vehicle for communications with each client about the services TADS would provide. At any time a model center could refer to the agreement to determine the stage of technical assistance from TADS. The center knows what to expect from TADS and what they will need to do to comply with the agreement. (b) To provide the focal point for managing a technical assistance delivery system that must coordinate several principal elements in a precise manner. Timelines, technical assistance responsibilities, and management responsibilities can be planned well in advance of delivery, with consideration given to resources and constraints. (c) To allow for accurate cost projections and budget management. (d) To provide a basis for administrative accountability for TADS activities to the funding agency through the existence of agreements and evidence of the extent to which TADS meets the agreements.

During the first three years, the technical assistance agreement-writing procedure was modified to provide for more efficiency. During the first technical assistance cycle, on-site needs assessment visits constituted a separate action by TADS; at some later date the center directors were brought together in a series of eight, small-group module meetings for the purpose of writing agreements. Each module meeting was organized around a major area of need which had been expressed by the member centers (e.g., communications, program planning).

Table 3

Technical Assistance Agreement Outline

CENTRAL CITY, U.S.A.

Technical Assistance Needs	Technical Assistance Outcome Objectives	Technical Assistance Actions	Technical Assistance Evaluation Plan
1.0 To develop a set of goals, objectives, and related activities for a program for children, a program for parents, and a program for project replication.	1.0 To develop a program plan in accordance with the TADS planning format for a program for children, a program for parents, and a program for replication.	1.0 The project personnel will utilize the Program Description Interview to outline a tentative program plan. This plan will be developed and mailed to TADS before Oct. 31, 1972. 1.1 The TADS PP and E staff will review and critique the tentative plan and make recommendations for revisions if revisions are necessary, in order to develop the outline in the TADS program planning format. The reviewed plan will be mailed to the project before Nov. 15, 1972. 1.2 The cycle of staff planning - TADS review shall continue until the program plan has been refined to satisfy the TADS planning format requirements. This should be completed before April 15, 1973.	1.0 The tentative program plan is delivered to TADS before October 31, 1972, and returned to the project, with a critique before November 15, 1972. 1.1 A copy of the refined program plan shall be filed in the TADS office by April 15, 1973. 1.2 Technical Assistance Evaluation Reports shall be filed in the TADS office by April 15, 1973 both by the project director and the TADS PP & E director.

For the second year, the agreements were developed as a part of the needs assessment visit, using the revised format presented in Table 3. Table 4 summarizes the technical assistance agree-

Table 4

Technical Assistance Agreements
1971-72/1972-73

	1971-72	1972-73
First-Year Centers	24	28
Second-Year Centers	18	25
Third-Year Centers	0	16
Total	42	69

ments developed during these years. The Guidelines for Writing Technical Assistance Agreements provide a full description and some examples of technical assistance agreements.

Technical Assistance Delivery

Several different methods have been used for the actual delivery of technical assistance services. They fall into three broad categories of assistance, according to where or how the services are delivered: (a) in-field technical assistance, (b) in-house technical assistance, and (c) in-print technical assistance.

1. In-field Technical Assistance. In-field technical assistance encompasses those activities that take place at model center sites or in conference settings. Assistance on the site of the center was conducted extensively throughout both years. On-site consultation was delivered in response to the terms of the agreements by matching a consultant's expertise with the specific needs of a center. Three major groups of consultants were used most often: (a) TADS Advisors, (b) directors and staff members from the HCEEP network, and (c) TADS senior staff. When it seemed appropriate, consultative services from outside these three groups were purchased.

Workshops and group meetings also have been used to deliver technical assistance. In most instances, they were conducted on-site and staffed with combinations of the three types of consultants already given. Workshop topics included program planning and evaluation, curriculum development, parent programming, replication, media and information services and community program development. TADS sponsored or assisted in 31 workshops in its first two years.

2. In-house Technical Assistance. In addition to the necessary staff preparation, training-packet development, and other activities that support the in-field activities, a number of daily in-house activities involved the delivery of direct technical assistance to centers.

Responses to requests for planning and preparing media presentations by and for the model centers have often been made without leaving the TADS central office. The presence of a media laboratory and media technicians within the TADS organization makes it possible to assist centers from a distance.

TADS staff members, as a response to the terms of technical assistance agreements, occasionally review and critique various written documents of the model centers, for example, program plans, evaluation plans and procedures, curriculum materials, curriculum guides, and dissemination materials. Many model centers require assistance in locating information and materials for use in their program activities. TADS responds to their information requests and conducts information searches when necessary.

3. In-print Technical Assistance. During its first two years TADS has produced 11 written documents and materials to address those needs shared in some way by all the model centers. These materials include monographs, annotated bibliographies, brochures and flyers, and a bimonthly newsletter to facilitate communication among the model centers and beyond.

Table 5 summarizes the incidences of technical assistance during the first two technical assistance cycles, according to the delivery method and the content of the assistance. As can be seen, there were substantial increases between 1971-72 and 1972-73 in the incidences of technical assistance delivered, with the exception of TADS-sponsored project visitations, which remained the

Table 5

Incidence of Technical Assistance Delivery

	On-site Consultation*		Project Visitation		Group Meetings+		Review and Critique°		Information Requests/ Responses°	
	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73	71/72	72/73
Program Planning and Evaluation	41	39	18	6	17	33	3	12	3	3
Child Intervention	41	98	34	38	41	4	0	7	16	12
Parent Programs	1	8	26	28	30	46	0	0	0	0
Community Program Development	13	17	0	6	2	37	0	0	1	8
Media and Information	32	23	0	0	0	0	1	7	5	48
Total	128	185	78	78	90	120	4	26	25	71

*Incidences expressed in number of days.
+Incidences expressed in number of participants.
°Includes only formal requests written into Technical Assistance Agreements.

same. On-site consultation was most often used in the delivery of technical assistance during each of the two years. It should be pointed out that the incidence figures reported for "Reviews and Critiques" and for "Information Requests/Responses" reflect only those efforts that were responses to formal requests written into the technical assistance agreement. TADS staff members and major advisors were responding in an informal manner continuously.

Principles of Organization and Management of Support Systems

In the course of providing systematic support to a network of clients through the process described above, TADS has identified a number of organization and management principles which should be observed. A brief description of these principles follows:

Development of an Authoritative Base

If comprehensive services are to be delivered to a set of educational service programs, it is imperative that the programs receiving the services view them as the most up-to-date and appropriate assistance currently available within the field. In special education, as in other fields of education, the authoritative base of knowledge is neither definitive nor accepted by all professionals. In contrast to other fields which have set up support systems, such as agriculture and engineering, the "truths" are not so well established. Leaders in the field often disagree on what principles exist and which instructional techniques to use. If a support system is to be effective, it must establish credibility based on an authoritative knowledge base. Even though the research and literature tell us a great deal about the field of special education, special educators at present are not sophisticated enough to be able to translate that information into practice or to accept it as "truth." In addition, it is quite widely acknowledged that there are many gaps in our existing knowledge in the education of the handicapped.

Some support systems may attempt to satisfy the authoritative knowledge-base principle by employing highly trained, visible professionals who already have developed an acceptable image. However, even this procedure may not establish beyond a doubt the authority of the system's base.

TADS chose to establish a Major Advisory Panel to the program, which was to have, in addition to other roles, a main purpose of providing an authoritative base for the system. The advisory panel is composed of experienced professionals who represent a variety of fields related to handicapped children, and who are respected and well known within their fields. In addition, the advisory panel members present a national perspective, since they represent different geographic areas of the country. Thus, the advisory group provides TADS with the authoritative base needed to give credibility to our services. The group meets at least once and sometimes twice a year to review and provide feedback on TADS procedures, and to develop new strategies and ideas for technical assistance. The advisors also play a key role in the actual delivery of technical assistance, providing field assistance in such

roles as needs assessor and consultant.

An advisors group plays another important role. A support organization serving a regional or nationwide clientele could tend very easily to become provincial and single-sighted in terms of its technical assistance and content responses. Providing technical assistance can be quite a heady experience for the staff members of such a system, and a tendency toward a sole source of authority can develop. During TADS' existence the diversity and comprehensiveness of the advisors group has prevented this occurrence. It is quite natural for other professional groups, university personnel, or state and federal agencies to look for signs of failure in a comprehensive support system. To be sure, technical assistance systems can be seen as viable alternatives to responsibilities in training and consultation which once were the sole province of university personnel, state agency staff members, and/or federal agency program officers. Therefore, any display of a lack of authoritative base, growing out of either staff expertise or the human resources available to the technical assistance system, might be seen as a vulnerable spot in a competitive system. For this reason alone, any support system would do well to consider carefully how to establish its authoritative base beyond a doubt.

Mutual Trust

In delivering technical assistance services to any client, it is imperative that mutual trust be established between the staff of the support system and the staff of the client system. This trust is important if the communications between the system and client are to be vehicles for change. Most client systems in general have a great deal of precedents to provide them with a feeling of mistrust. In the past, much of the consultation provided to educational settings has been seen by many people as "rip-offs" by the establishment. Consultants might come in to a program, spend a day or so determining what the program is trying to accomplish, and then spend perhaps another half day providing responses to questions. Often, consultants come into the situation with little knowledge about the practical delivery of educational services. Many consultants attempt to increase the effectiveness of educational services by increasing the effectiveness of the communication processes among staff members. Their manner of so doing often suggests that the consultants believe that they are much better trained than and superior in knowledge to the person(s) actually delivering educational services. No matter how good the content of the message is, if the recipient of the message is to develop a positive response and be motivated to take the necessary steps to implement that message, then it must not include an additional message of "you are inferior."

For some time it has been recognized that the need for mutual trust between persons on each end of a consultative interaction is extremely important. One response to this principle has been the initiation of activities that resemble what is known as sensitivity training with the client staff members. Not having had training in group dynamics and sensitivity training, it is perhaps inappro-

priate for us to comment on their merits. However, TADS discarded the possibility of this approach early in its conceptualization of delivery systems.

TADS has had success in establishing mutual trust by adopting a realistic approach to it. The need for mutual trust has been discussed with client staff members in an open, straightforward way. If the support system is to be of service to the client system, the client system must respect and trust the services of the support system. Conversely, if the support system is to have an impact on the ultimate client--in TADS' case, young handicapped children--then it must respect and trust the capabilities of the client system to deliver meaningful educational services. In HCEEP, many highly trained professionals have numerous skills that demand respect, and TADS has been able to recognize these skills. They are readily apparent to the support system's staff members or consultants when they have opportunities to observe personally the client system staff members in their respective professional roles.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the important keys to establishing a relationship of mutual trust and respect between a client and the support system. As program needs are identified, they must remain confidential between the client and the support system, if the support system is going to continue to be of help.

As the client works with the support system and begins to expose or discover program needs and weaknesses, he places himself and the program in a vulnerable position. He faces the possibility of having the weaknesses reported to the funding agency or his superiors; or the weaknesses may somehow be exposed to his professional peers or colleagues. At the very least, he exposes the weaknesses to himself and the representative of the support system. All these possibilities can be threatening, and even a competent client would be reluctant to engage in this kind of self-appraisal without some assurance that he will be helped rather than harmed.

Therefore, the representatives of the support system must seek to establish a relationship similar to that of a lawyer and his client, that is, to be strictly supportive, not evaluative, and to treat information confidentially and use it solely in support of the client. This relationship protects the client's rights, and allows him to be completely honest about his situation.

Representatives of the support system should establish lawyer-like relationships, otherwise, the client is likely to hide the true situation of his program, which makes the support services ineffective. It should also be pointed out that if the support system representative should ever violate confidentiality, the result would not only adversely affect the relationship with the client, but weaken credibility with other clients who learn of that breach of confidence, also. On the other hand, a reputation of being trustworthy can spread rapidly and enhance the support system's ability to establish relationships with future clients.

Continuous and Sequential Technical Assistance

It has become apparent over the last three years that several principles dealing with the timing and actual delivery of technical assistance are extremely important. If the client knows that the support system is available for continuous support, each technical assistance incident seems to be more effective.

In most educational efforts there is a hierarchy of organizational development which can only be effected through continuous and sequential technical assistance. The first stage in the hierarchy is the organization's ability to conceptualize the content for a particular educational setting. The second stage deals with the use of the knowledge and concepts to develop meaningful program plans for the delivery of educational services. The final stage of organizational development is the ability to implement the planned programs. When technical assistance is planned and delivered in recognition of these sequential steps in organizational development, continuity and sequential support naturally follow.

Comprehensiveness

One of the main principles that sets technical assistance systems apart from other consultative services is their ability to respond comprehensively across all areas of the client's organizational needs. As educational organizations move from initial levels to a higher order of organizational development, the needs that a support system must address will change.

During the first three years of its activities, TADS experimented with variations of the technical assistance delivery system on a trial basis. It was found that when technical assistance was delivered by an agency that had a positive reputation in a definitive area of programing, such as language development or dissemination, that agency was either unable or unwilling to provide support across all areas of the client's programmatic needs.

To carry out the principle of comprehensiveness, the support system must not become identified with a particular program bias or develop a "party line." If the technical assistance support system becomes entrenched in one particular philosophical viewpoint, such as behavior modification, it will be difficult to provide support to clients that are not following that philosophical base. If a support system is to be responsive to all legitimate needs of a client program, it cannot afford the luxury of developing its own theoretical viewpoint on how the client system should be delivering educational services. A certain amount of caution should be exercised on this point, however. When the authoritative base is quite clear and there is substantial support for a particular theoretical or philosophical viewpoint that transcends the profession, then it is the responsibility of the support system to reflect that authoritative position in its services.

Access to Resources

Since a broad-base support system cannot expect to capture in its organization all the resources necessary to serve the clients, it must be knowledgeable of a wide variety of outside resources and able to provide those resources for clients as needed. The most important by far are the human resources, but both print and nonprint materials should be included. The bread and butter of a successful support system is its ability to identify and deliver appropriate, high-quality human resources to its clients.

TADS had gained access to human resources in several ways: (a) Through its advisors group (who collectively offer a broad range of content areas, geographical distribution, and professional experience), many consultants in programs have been brought into the service of TADS. (b) The clients had identified resources for themselves. "I think so and so would be helpful if we could get her," a client might say, and TADS would then arrange the consultation. (c) The clients themselves have become the important resource, and through TADS are consulting with one another.

The identification of resources involves a constant dialog between the needs of clients and the expertise available to meet those needs, but it is important in that dialog that the needs of the client speak first and remain a dominant voice. Unless that is the case, the support system runs the risk of developing resources that have little relevance to its client group and their needs. Frequent needs assessment will keep the support system honest as it acquires and maintains an arsenal of information on human resources.

Consultant/Client Compatibility

The success or failure of support services by a consultant is determined in part by how compatible that consultant is with the personnel and program being served. Compatibility along a number of dimensions can affect the consultant's ability to work with the center's staff. For example, if the biases of the center's staff and the consultants are not similar in important areas, the consultant's advice may not be valued, or the two sides may never get beyond arguing their differences.

The home base of the consultant may affect the way he is viewed by the client. "University types" may be suspect in some public school settings, whereas a consultant with equal skills but from another public school system may be readily accepted. Other factors such as age, sex, race, personality, and communication style may affect the compatibility of the consultant with the client. There are, doubtless, still other factors--too many, in fact, for an analysis of them all to be realistic in choosing each consultant. Moreover, some factors of possible incompatibility (such as race, sex) probably ought to be consciously disregarded or confronted in many instances. Nevertheless, insofar as assuring a good client/consultant "fit" enhances the probability of success in providing support services, the matching of consultant to client should be made carefully, and on the basis of as much available information as possible on both the prospective consultant and the client.

WORKING IN AND THROUGH SUPPORT SYSTEMS: REFLECTIONS

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I am interested and pleased at the concern expressed about how to make somewhat more rational and humane a system of federal support for education that is often antirational and antihumane, as well as politically partisan. In my view, it is of central importance that we try to make that system even marginally more rationale and more humane, however often we may fail, or the system may beat us. Essentially, that is what this conference was about. For a long time, many of us have been talking about the various mechanisms and efforts, called support systems, LTIs (Leadership Training Institutes) or whatever, which are designed to provide those needed qualities.

There is a danger, when looking back and providing a history for something that exists in the present, of dressing it up in marvelous clothes in retrospect. And there is a danger of taking credit for a beautiful theory and its translation into practice, and for great planning. Much of such history is inevitably a kind of reconstruction that has only a tangential relation to the realities of the moment at which the actual decisions were made, and thus it should be discounted; but at least I can look back and reconstruct the history as I wish it had been, although it was not always exactly so.

Sometime in 1968, after about the first half year or so of the Education Professions Development Act, the Bureau created to administer that legislation decided that it would establish a lot of fairly separate categorical programs under the act. Therefore, we created an early childhood program, a special education program, a vocational education program, and a range of others. In retrospect, this fragmentation of programs may have been a serious mistake. In any event, these programs were the genesis of what came to be called the Leadership Training Institutes (LTIs).

We had three or four primary motivations for creating LTIs. First, we faced a situation in which we had a very small constituency and a very narrow group of advisers who had been inherited largely from the NDEA summer institute days. Most of the latter were college professors in the liberal arts or in professional education. They were good people but they were almost entirely higher education professionals. As such, they represented a limited cross section of EPDA's world. Almost completely missing from the group were representatives of the community we were purporting to serve, such as low-income and minority people. Also missing, to a large extent, were school teachers, administrators, and people from special areas of concern, such as special education.

The development of a broader constituency was essential to our operations. In a sense, broadening

the political base. At the time, some people accused us, with some justification, of attempting to develop a system that also would be an effective group of political constituents. In fact, we probably made the error of intermingling the function of political support with the other kind of support that we genuinely needed. For us, gaining the latter kind of support meant gaining access to the ideas, help, and information from a much broader range of people than the one represented when we started out. So here is one motivation for the establishment of the LTIs: the need for a broadly representative base of people on whom we could draw for various kinds of help and service, and who could provide support and criticism for what we were trying to do.

The second motivation grew out of a recognition that our Bureau staff was almost totally inadequate for the tasks we were attempting to achieve. In the first place, we did not have very many people. Second, staff members lacked the background, experience, and expertise for the new types of programs we were talking about because they represented either career people from the federal service, who were primarily program managers, or people whose orientation was properly geared to the NDEA summer institute program--foreign language professors from colleges and universities, for example--and they really were not immediately qualified to deal with the problems of training early childhood personnel in city ghettos.

Clearly, some kind of compensation was needed for these obvious and very severe staff limitations. One way of solving the problem was to get 200-300 new staff people, properly qualified, and to train them to do various jobs. However, it took perhaps three hours after I came to the Office of Education to discover that not only were we not going to have a staff of 300 but we probably would be lucky to have three or four new members. So the second motivation was to try to devise some other way of extending what our staff with its inadequate numbers of background could accomplish. The LTIs were one way we could extend our staff capacity.

These two motivations merged with a third, which was to find ways of increasing the quality of funded projects which would be appropriate to the federal role and would, in fact, make some real difference in the field. We were looking for a way to close the gap between the reality of what was happening and our overinflated rhetoric about the reformation of American education through better personnel. We easily fell into the trap of seeing EPDA as a kind of ultimate answer to a variety of educational problems, and of creating very high expectations which, of course, were never realized. Anyway, we were concerned about what really went on in the projects in the field, not just about getting money out to them. We saw the LTIs as serving to help improve project quality.

Those are, I would say, the three most important motivations for what became a rather complex program of LTIs. They were called Leadership Training Institutes, by the way, because we wanted to get the word "training" or something that meant the same thing into the title. Since EPDA was an educational personnel development or training authorization, it would not have been proper to call

the LTIs "support systems," or "advice and technical assistance," or "research and evaluation and development and helping organizations." "Training" was part of the title for that reason.

We tried to define training in a broad sense in our minds and in the minds of the people with whom we were working. Thus we proceeded to set up 12 Leadership Training Institutes over a period of a year or so. As it turned out, they all took very different forms. The amazing variety was not a result of marvelous planning and a devotion to pluralism: it happened because of our inability to explain the concept and because of disagreements and all kinds of things. In retrospect, one could say, "Well, they are that way because each was formed to fit the particular needs of its program or field." Unhappily, that was not always the case. The LTIs ranged from groups that ended up being little more than committees that met two or three times a year, had a conference or two and issued a report, to operations that did a great deal more than that. The latter related themselves in a very important way to the projects in the field and began to realize some of our initial expectations. The last LTI of real significance that was created was the Urban-Rural School Development Program. At the time, we had a very large program and a very limited staff so, in essence, we tried to create an LTI to take major responsibilities for the program and to work on a continuing on-site basis with people in the field to develop the projects. Consequently, it carried further than any other LTI the notion of an extension of staff or a compensation for the limitations in the Office of Education staff. That LTI, headed by Robert Hess at Stanford, had a staff of field people, most of whom actually lived and worked near the communities with the project.

Dr. Gallagher's point about timing is an important one and it deserves some careful consideration. The motivations and pressures relating to time are very different for different actors in the cast of characters. For program managers, heads of bureaus, commissioners, and such people in the Office of Education, the timing incentives and motivations are to accomplish a lot in a hurry. They know that they have only a short time in office (everybody else knows it, too) so the natural human ambition of wanting to do something while one can produces a considerable pressure. They find it hard to think in long-range terms--what is going to happen five fiscal years from now--because they know very well that they will be out by then.

Added to that, as Dr. Gallagher suggested, commissioners and bureau heads are under considerable pressure from their constituents, Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, or some planning office to "produce" something. There is a strong impulse to prepare impressive charts to show what was done with, for example the $44 million, how many kids improved their reading scores, and all of those kinds of things. There is great pressure to "produce" on the division and bureau level leadership, at least in the Office of Education. This pressure is probably not very well understood by people in the academic world.

My last two years back in a university setting have reminded me that different clocks are used

in the federal bureaucracy and the academic system. Academics work hard, but the pace and concept of time are slower than in the bureaucracy. It is difficult for the bureaucrat always to be as patient and leisurely in an educational process as he should be.

Another problem, and I guess the most severe one, is internal staff opposition to giving much authority and decision-making responsibility to some nonfederal, nonbureaucratic agency, whether it is called LTI or anything else. The staff person responsible may be concerned about losing control and losing his relatively small area of making a difference in decision making: he may feel that he is going to be overshadowed somehow because someone else will be doing the kinds of things he thinks he ought to be doing. He may also be concerned that he is not going to be able adequately to control a program once it gets started and that it will go off in all sorts of wild directions which may get him into trouble. That is a real concern, and it is a source of genuine opposition to the idea of delegating authority to an external support system. This internal opposition problem has to be worked on through a variety of trust-building and trust-developing activities. There should be joint training and orientation, and many opportunities for OE staff persons and LTI staff members to spend time to get acquainted and work together. There are many ways to build a decent kind of relationship. Tensions and differences of objectives are bound to occur, and it must be recognized that total trust may never exist; nevertheless a good working relationship is a reasonable and achievable objective to work toward.

These kinds of activities take a lot of time, cost a lot of money, and carry with them virtually no tangible rewards. No congressional committee is going to give you a lot of credit because you sponsored a number of workshops to raise the trust level between the division directors and the people working in the LTIs, although that may be the most important thing in the world for you to have done. I am suggesting that there be some way of intervening to make sure that enough of that kind of activity takes place so that the system works, and that no one should simply depend on the good will and good intentions of the people involved.

A second problem is the confusion about roles which, in the cases of some of our LTIs, was never fully resolved. Some confusion and ambiguity is probably healthy, because they lead to some creative activities and ideas that would have been missed if everything were cut and dried. In many cases, however, the confusion was so great that it led to people's being immobilized, or to their starting off in one direction and then backing up and doing something else.

The third problem, one of the greatest the federal agencies have, is a constant tendency to change signals. The person in charge changes, or the bureau head is given a different cue from Congress or some planning office. When the signals change for him however suddenly, he must change the signals to the field just as suddenly. It is one of the things that works against rationality

and humaneness. The system itself, the method of funding and monitoring, should be revised so that the bureau or office is not permitted to change signals frequently or suddenly. There must be some buffering and protection for the people in the field against sudden changes, at least in their most capricious forms.

There is a final point I should make about problems. Some of the LTIs became bureaucracies in their own rights, and began to orient primarily to themselves and to their own needs, rather than to the field. They forgot their clients--the people who were being served in the projects and the staffs of those projects--and began to develop superstructures and ambitions of their own. In a sense, they became another version of the Office of Education, in that they were not properly serving the clients. To prevent this situation, support systems should be set up so that they can provide the services they are supposed to and be held accountable in every way possible by the clients.

If I were to do it again, I would want to devise a more specific contractual relationship between a support system, such as an LTI, and the client organizations and individuals that it is serving to make the support system accountable to its clients. Then the project director would be in the position of being able to say, "Look part of the money for our program is being set aside for a support system. That support system is supposed to provide these things; we have a contract that says it is going to perform the tasks in clauses one through eight. The support system hasn't done any of them, however; it is holding conferences on topics that we aren't interested in. Something has to be done about it." I do not know what is the exact bureaucratic device for doing that "something," but there should be some method of accountability so that the clients themselves can call the support system to task rather than just depending on the good will of either the support system or the people in the federal agency.

The program of LTIs was an effort at bureaucratic innovation. Despite some of the problems I have mentioned here, the effort was very much worthwhile. By and large, the money devoted to LTIs was productive in relation to the purposes of EPDA and the grant recipients.

My words up to this point have been in the vein of reminiscence, memoirs, and looking back. It would be a mistake to view the history of LTIs without noting that the need for LTIs, or other similar support systems, will be even greater in the future. The need to work toward a more rational and humane and productive system of federal support for education is even more pressing now than it was in the late 1960's. The difficulties of making progress toward this end are as severe as they were--perhaps even worse--because of widespread skepticism and disenchantment with the nature and results of the programs of the past decade.

As a former bureaucrat, the least and probably the best I can do is to offer guidelines, a familiar genre to me and, I suspect, to most of my readers.

1. There is a need for multiple and diverse and specialized support systems to match the multiple,

diverse and specialized needs and programs in the field. For example, Spanish-English bilingual programs need support mechanisms tailored to such programs, with experienced and expert staff and a repertoire of ideas, materials, and approaches that suits a particular set of clients. Hence, I would argue for many small helping organizations or agencies rather than a few large multipurpose centers. This means that there should be scores (20 or 30) of LTIs at any given time to support the diverse programs of the Office of Education, NIE, and other federal agencies administering education legislation. This "guildline" should not be taken to be an argument for many fragmented categorical programs that characterized the Office of Education in the wake of the legislative bonanza period of the 1960's certainly proved undesirable, even if the most effective system of support was designed. The kind of diverse and specialized LTIs suggested here would be appropriate under an approach such as special revenue sharing, and channeled through the state department of education, or a local school problem-solving plan such as that envisioned under the ill-fated Educational Renewal plan. The "categories of need" should be those created by the local school district (or college or state department), which then has access to a variety of LTIs with the capacity and specialized expertise to respond to the locally determined need.

2. A diversity of sponsorship and setting should be deliberately sought: university departments and special institutes and centers; research and development centers and regional laboratories; private, non profit organizations; and consortia of organizations and institutions. Universities should have no monopoly on this kind of activity, nor should they be discriminated against in competition for participation. The kinds of expertise, interests, and helping spirit which are needed can be assembled in a variety of settings.

3. Each LTI, regardless of the nature of its sponsoring agency, should have a broadly representative advisory and policy board. Each should include a substantial number of non professionals--parents, other community residents, students, and others who can represent the views of the clients and consumers of the education programs. Each should also include classroom teachers, school administrators, and others who can represent the views of on-the-line practitioners. The policy and advisory boards should also include scholars and experts in fields relevant to the work of the LTI. It should not go without saying (but it unfortunately does not) that the group should be fairly representative by sex, race, age, ethnicity, and geography. Such representativeness is not primarily for political reasons but, rather, to assure that pluralistic and diverse perspectives and points-of-view guide the work of the LTI. Furthermore, the many kinds of expertise of a ghetto parent, high-school student who is participating in a federally funded program, labor leader or businessman, or an ordinary citizen and taxpayer cannot be expected from scholars or professional specialists. The reverse is also true. The scholars and professionals should not by any means be excluded; they should not be allowed the self-defeating luxury of unilaterally running their own show, however.

4. The LTIs should come out of the closet. A strong and open case can now be made within the federal agencies and to both the authorizing and appropriations committees in Congress for the need, desirability, appropriateness, and practical value of providint LTI-type support mechanisms on a considerably expanded scale. The fear has been that "they" would not understand, that the LTIs would be axed by the OE budget and planning office, "the Secretary's office," "the White House," or "the Hill." There was fear that such enterprises might be seen as boondoggles diverting money from projects in the field or serving as a cover for excessive "wheeling and dealing" by the bureaucrats. It would be helpful now to lay out plans and justifications for an expanded program of supporting mechanisms for funded projects in the field and to include in those plans clear and specific provisions for monitoring and review. To assure fairness and guard against real or imagined cronyism, grants and contracts for LTIs should be made only on a competitive basis. Funds could be sought in any one of several ways: (a) as part of the agency's request for evaluation and dissemination activities; (b) as a special set-aside under various categorical and formula grant authorizations; or (c) as a separate new authorization bill. All three ways would require Congressional approval, of course, which is as it should be. I believe that a strong case can be made and that it should be made strongly by both federal officials and LTI leaders and "users" in the field. I believe that an appropriate way could be worked out to handle both the authorization and appropriation questions, if there is a will to do so.

5. Funding for an LTI should not be lavish but it should be sufficient for each to provide a range of interrelated services: pinpointed studies and policy analysis; technical assistance to projects; training and conferences, newsletters, reports, and other means of communicating between and among the LTI and the projects it serves; and evaluation.

Lists of guidelines have a way of getting too long, too detailed, and too rambling to be of any practical guidance. Although more could be said, the important point with which I want to conclude is that LTIs should not be viewed as an interesting historical relic. There is a greater need now than before for support systems to help make federal educational programs more rational, humane, and effective. The LTI concept (by whatever name) should be expanded, extended, and undergirded by specific authorization and allocation funds. What has been done to date demonstrates that outside mechanisms of support (e.g., training, infusion of new ideas, communication between federal officials and the field, technical assistance, moral support, evaluation) can be a significant asset in a large, complex system. A case can and should be made to Executive and Congressional branch decision makers that well-devised external support mechanisms are an essential part of providing for accountability and quality control in federal education efforts.

The Project Advocate System: An Exceptional Child Leadership Training Institute on an EPDA Mission

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The primary charge to the Exceptional Child Program under the Education Professional Development Act (EPDA) was to promote such training for regular education personnel as would help them to deal more effectively with the learning needs of exceptional children. This responsibility was specified after a sampling of the opinions of both regular and special educators confirmed it as the most productive way to achieve the following goals:

1. To modify the assumption of regular education personnel that the most effective way to educate handicapped children was in self-contained special classes, although the isolation was unwise and unnecessary for many of the children.

2. To reduce the unnecessary and questionable practice of classifying children as handicapped to make them eligible for special help when regular teachers were unable or unwilling to make the instructional adaptations the children needed.

3. To complement and support the personnel training efforts administered through the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH), which emphasized the preparation of personnel for service in special education systems.

The Bureau of Educational Professions Development (BEPD), later the National Center for Improvement of Educational Systems (NCIES), was established to develop operating procedures and administer funds for all training projects supported by EPDA resources. Mounting evidence indicated that the national system of public education was not providing equal educational opportunity for all children; the concern about this evidence was reflected in the kinds of programs enabled under EPDA: Bilingual Education, Urban-Rural, Exceptional Children, Early Childhood, and Teacher Corps, for example. These programs represented special efforts to respond to special problem areas which, apparently, were dealt with inadequately when training was organized for traditional professional roles and functions (e.g., school administrators, pupil personnel service professions, regular teachers). It is noteworthy that the Exceptional Children Program was not specifically mandated under EPDA but was developed out of working agreements negotiated by Drs. Donald Davies and James Gallagher, then the directors of BEPD and BEH, respectively.

Special educators were aware that among the many children referred to them as "educationally

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The opinions expressed in this paper are solely those of the author. They do not represent the official position of either the NCIES or the Leadership Training Institute/Special Education.

handicapped," a large number probably would not need to be so regarded or served if the regular education system had a greater capability to individualize instruction. Although neither regular nor special educators were quite sure how the essential accommodative capacity of the educational mainstream could be increased, special educators were more than willing to share the insights and technology that they had achieved during the years of struggle to effectively devise and adapt educational procedures to the physical, mental, emotional, and/or social differences of children defined as handicapped. Against this background, the BEPD program was instigated with the hope that a joint regular-special educator search for more effective means of individualization might redound to the benefit of all school children.

Many scientists and educators have commented on the long delay that typically occurs between theory and technology--between empirical research and the translation of its findings into useful ideas. However, the political process which makes financial resources available does not foster an empirical approach to the development of working propositions. Campbell (1969) noted that in order to secure legislative support, educators and other professionals often advocate specific programs as though they were certain to be successful, sometimes without evidence to support the optimism. Americans are often accused of believing naively that solutions to public problems are a function of the amount of money spent. If the technology does not exist to deal with a problem, Americans will be able to invent it once they have the money to get going.

Although systematic efforts to achieve narrowly targeted goals have resulted in such historic events as the discovery of the principles of nuclear fission and the placing of a man on the moon, attempts to promote educational improvement have been neither defined so clearly nor supported so systematically by the federal government. Indeed, Campbell (1969) urged educators to construct and carry out reforms as experiments so that their assumptions could be tested and the results could contribute constructively to the basic knowledge pool on which educators must draw to make decisions that will result in children's better learning. When governmental bureaucracies are established to implement legislative intent, they are forced to cope with both unclear and shifting political intentions and inadequate resources if they are to keep moving in desirable educational directions.

The Exceptional Child LTI Support System

BEPD established a Leadership Training Institute (LTI) to help each EPDA program it administered to achieve its particular mission through what was referred to at first as "technical" and later as "developmental" assistance. The questions of how this support function was to be served, what the role of the LTIs was to be, and how they were to fulfill their charge were not fully solved before the units were set in motion.

The publication, Means to a Mission (BEPD, 1972), summarized the thinking of a special BEPD

Task Force on the problem of how to support educational improvement through technical or developmental assistance. (See also Kelley, Loomis, & Ahlmann, 1972.) Since each EPDA program focused on a different aspect of educational improvement, the problems addressed by each program fell at varying points along a continuum of progress toward better performance. Each program was generated and influenced by different social conditions and, thus, it was inevitable and appropriate for each LTI to function somewhat differently. The mission of the Exceptional Child LTI was delineated a bit more specifically than that of other EPDA programs, but still the goal was broad enough and the resources were limited enough to require some narrowing of targets and setting of priorities if maximum capital were to be made of the opportunity offered. The LTI publication, Exceptional Children in Regular Classrooms (Reynolds & Davis, 1971), reported the soundings obtained from educational critics on the directions that might be taken most profitably by the Exceptional Child LTI to unlock better opportunities for handicapped children.

The first tentative objectives of the Exceptional Child LTI were set on the basis of these soundings, the ideas provided by a broadly representative LTI Advisory Panel, and discussions with BEPD staff on what that agency hoped to achieve through its LTI mechanisms. There was no tradition to provide a road map for the LTI and, as with many federal programs, little time in which to develop one before choosing a direction.

One thing seemed clear: The Exceptional Child LTI could help projects conceive their reform efforts as experiments and contribute their combined experience to the greater understanding of the problems and values of the particular change directions being advocated. Campbell (1969) and others suggested this procedure to narrow the gap between theory and practice to make education systems more accountable.

Armed with these admittedly rough, preliminary conceptions, the LTI set out to discover how support help might be rendered most effectively. The staff recognized that this effort, like all of the projects funded under the Exceptional Child Program, should be viewed and conducted as an experiment. It should be noted that from the beginning the LTI Advisory Panel members differed over whether the LTI should be merely advisory and wait for projects funded under the Program to request help, or should be more aggressive and take active steps to encourage and support project improvements in terms of the Programs' mission and the needs of handicapped children. Some members argued that institutions incapable of carrying out quality programs within the purposes and standards of the funding program simply should not be funded. Other members contended that the authorization of the total EPDA effort had been a recognition that, in fact, high-quality educational conceptualization and delivery did not exist equally around the country, which was why children's educational opportunities were unequal; if only the clearly adequate efforts were funded, and no systematic attempt were made to raise the levels of aspiration and capability of below-par programs, the "rich"

would continue to get richer and the "poor," poorer.

Service delivery systems are vulnerable to severe political pressures which may lead to at least two kinds of undesirable consequences: (a) Sound funding decisions by professional staff may be overruled at some higher executive level for political reasons, or (b) the agency may tend to protect itself from both internal and external attacks by funding only those programs that are most likely to succeed. Neither outcome solves the basic public problem of unequal opportunity, yet each is a reality that must be dealt with in some way.

It was hoped that a program support unit solely concerned with program quality and allegiance to the improvement of children's performances, which was staffed by persons who were not dependent on satisfying political forces, might be in a good position to keep its efforts goal oriented. Consequently, the Exceptional Child LTI was structured so that the whole professional staff as on part-time appointments. These staff members were primarily identified with home institutions from which they secured releases to provide part-time professional services for the LTI to projects which had been funded under the EPDA Exceptional Child Program and certain other eligible projects.

In the initial year of the Program, 90 projects were funded, one of which was the LTI itself. The LTI had no part in determining which projects were funded; its task was to try to enhance the performance of whatever projects EPDA included in the Program. Some of the projects were short-term, inservice institutes and they were largely completed before the LTI was activated. Some projects were joint efforts of the BEPD Early Childhood and Exceptional Children Programs, which made them the concerns of both the Early Childhood and Exceptional Child LTIS. Many projects were directed by regular educators.

Initially, the Exceptional Child LTI attempted to size up project needs and meet its responsibilities to them as best it could by bringing project staff members together in conferences to share ideas and results, arranging team site visits to all projects, facilitating communication through a Newsletter and the dissemination of information on special education developments, and consulting with individual projects upon request. In the second year of project operations, one LTI staff member attempted to visit as many projects as possible, particularly new projects which had not been visited previously by a team or BEPD representatives. The goal was to obtain a profile of the project and clues to the service strategies that might be productive in meeting its needs. Reports of these visits were sent to the project director, the LTI director, and the BEPD program officer. Team site visits were reported in the same way.

It appeared that many projects could benefit from outside help in formulating problems and reaching profitable solutions. One-shot consultations, according to expectations, had little impact on goals that involved complicated social issues and complex institutional dynamics. Many project directors were not yet accustomed to tackling problems in terms of a systems approach; project goals

were not formulated precisely enough to permit adequate evaluation, and the plans for evaluation were inadequate in an alarming number of instances. Some projects were high in quality and manifested model performance in almost every respect. High variation in the apparent developmental needs of projects seemed to call for greater flexibility in the rendering of developmental assistance to serve the particular needs of each.

Project Advocates: Purveyors of Technical Assistance

As a result of these findings, the LTI developed for the 1972 fiscal year a technical assistance plan that was aimed at achieving a greater accommodation of program development aid to meet the needs of individual projects. Seven agents, four selected from the past and current members of the Advisory Panel and three from the LTI staff, were each assigned a specific roster of projects to serve on a continuing basis, that is, to help the staffs work through their most critical developmental problems. Each agent was to visit each project assigned as soon as possible, if (s)he had not previously visited it, in order to acquire firsthand knowledge of project conditions, including the ideologic biases of staff and other persons who were in a position to influence directions and outcomes. Although these agents were experienced special educators, it was assumed that none could be expert in all areas of possible need. Therefore, the LTI reserved funds with which to tap other sources of help when the project director and agent agreed that a proposed plan was promising and feasible but the LTI agent could not provide the required assistance.

The seven LTI agents were assigned to projects mainly on a geographic basis because all held other responsible positions and consideration had to be given to their time and convenience. However, the three LTI staff members who served as agents assumed responsibility for the more geographically scattered projects. One of the three who regularly served as a special consultant on community and minority group participation, was assigned projects likely to need considerable help in these areas. The four agents who were not on the LTI staff were paid a daily honorarium (at the rate of the LTI standard consultant fee) and expenses.

The seven LTI program development agents and other LTI and BEPD respresentatives met in August 1971 to develop ground rules for the consulting operation. It was decided that the seven should be called "Project Advocates" (PAs), a title that seemed to reflect the intended focus of the service: the PAs were not federal agency supervisors, auditors, or policing agents but solely a resource to help projects to succeed. In this capacity, the PAs could act as advocates for legitimate pursuits of the projects with the Bureau, LTI, host institutions, project trainees and staff, related community institutions, or any other parties whose support and cooperation were deemed essential to success. The primary criterion of the legitimacy of project aspirations was the mission of the Exceptional Child EPDA program.

The PAs would advocate directions in project development that were viewed as defensible and desirable to accomplish the main purpose of the program. It was agreed that PAs existed mainly as a resource to project directors and each project director was the link between a PA and the assigned project. If the PA had impressions to report, (s)he reported them to the director. No personal, evaluative judgments of specific projects were reported to either the LTI or the Bureau unless the project director requested such a report or agreed with the recommendation of the PA that the report be made. In filing a claim for honoraria and expense reimbursements, the PA was required to report merely when he had visited a project, how much time (s)he had spent there, and, in general, what he had done (classes of people talked to, sites visited, etc.). This kind of report contrasted sharply with the evaluative nature of previous site visit reports to the BEPD program officer and LTI director.

If a project director desired consultation or staff development services other than those normally provided by the LTI, he would make the request to the PA and the recommendation of the PA would determine whether the necessary LTI funds would or would not be made available. In such situations, the PA would first make certain that the nature of the problem had been adequately assessed and then would help the project staff to specify the kind of consultation or service that would be most useful. Although the PA would solicit suggestions from project staff, the PA was expected to base the final recommendation for LTI funds on her/his judgment.

PAs were urged to give time and thought to developing the posture that was presumed for the role and its functions. It was recognized that establishing credibility for the PA-project relationship would be difficult because it was new and different for both the PA and the project or funded institution. Unlike earlier federal agency representatives, PAs visited projects to offer support rather than to judge. In the past, federal agency representatives and site visitors had been generally associated with the granting or withdrawal of funds in whole or part; site visit teams came to observe and review projects briefly and then to report their conclusions directly to the responsible federal agency. Although the LTI site visit teams had functioned as technical assistants to the projects, the team reports had been sent directly to the Bureau program officer and LTI office; the one saving grace had been that the project directors received copies of the reports at the same time. However, the very fact that the Bureau agent received reports with evaluations of project quality was interpreted as the undeniable possiblity that the impressions of these one-time LTI observers might directly influence the continued funding of the projects. It was not unreasonable to suspect that the federal agency relied heavily on the opinions reflected in the reports because it lacked the staff resources to develop independent judgments.

Given this history, it was predicted that PAs would have to earn the trust of project staffs. They would have to behave in ways that were consistent with the role of helper and not of "spy." PAs

worried about their moral obligations if they concluded that a project was using funds for unauthorized purposes or was so poorly conceived and executed that it was beyond help. What if the PA believed that further funding would be a waste of scarce resources? To meet this problem, the recommendation was made that the Bureau continue to operate a program auditing system, such as site visits by an evaluation team, which would be totally separate from the LTI. Interestingly, project directors wanted such team site visits to be continued, despite the institution of the PA support system, because they saw the site visits as providing objective appraisals of the total project and evaluations of staff personnel and needs. Granted that site visits did not entirely resolve the moral dilemma faced by the PAs, still the PAs agreed to move ahead and to explore the extent of the problem in practice.

On the basis of this preliminary structuring of their role, the PAs began their activities in September 1971. Certain conditions militated against an adequate test of the project advocate conception. Some projects had been in operation for two years and their operations had become sufficiently established so they were not particularly open to outside influences; the funds of 13 were slated for termination in July 1972 so they had little incentive or capability to change their practices; and although all projects had been funded for more than one year, all were schedule to phase out--19 in 1973, 4 in 1974, and 4 in 1975. The funds which had been devoted to the EDPA Exceptional Child Program were destined for a broader plan which would include the purposes of the Exceptional Child Program. Thus, all the people involved in the Exceptional Child Program were aware that the technical and financial problems were intertwined. In many cases, the PA could not help a project because the problem was additional financial resources rather than technical assistance and support.

In July 1972, a simple opinion survey was undertaken to help the LTI and Bureau decide whether to continue the project advocate system into the 1973 fiscal year. Data and opinions were solicited from project directors and participating PAs. The survey questions were simple, direct, and generally open ended. They supplemented the reactions solicited throughout the period of operations from project directors after visits by Projects Advocates. An analysis was also made of the data collected on the system by the LTI: number of visits reported, time spent in visiting projects, amount of additional consultative help funded, costs of Project Advocate visits, and the like.

In September 1972, a meeting was held of the Project Advocates, LTI staff, members of the LTI's Developmental Assistance Committee (originally known as the Advisory Panel), and representatives from the BEH and NCIES (the name of the BEPD had been changed officially by this time). One half-day of the meeting was devoted to the review and analysis of the Project Advocate experience and survey responses.

The survey procedure was repeated at the end of the 1973 fiscal year when the project advocate

system was scheduled for termination. The system coordinators reviewed their experiences with all PAs individually; however, no group meeting was held for the interpretation of data, like the one in 1972. Each PA submitted a report evaluating her/his two-year experience in the role, including the merits or lack thereof of the support efforts.

Outcomes and Conclusions

First year: 1971-1972

In the review and analysis at the end of the first year of the Project Advocate system's operations, only one project director thought the system should be discontinued. The rest were in favor of its continuation. In the forefront of the reasons advanced was the kind of service PAs provided: A project director felt free to discuss his problems with the PA without minimizing them or fearing the loss of funding. Furthermore, PAs were frequently able to offer assistance that relieved a problem. In both informal discussions and survey responses, project directors frequently and voluntarily noted their perceptions of the project advocate system as a helping resource and not a policing operation.

The survey included on nondirective and open-ended question on the kind of PA help that project directors found to be most beneficial. A great deal of weight was given to the responses because they appeared to reflect high project director concern; indeed, the responses seemed to indicate a problem that was common to directors of all projects.

The aid most frequently mentioned as useful was that provided in the negotiation of better relationships with the key representatives of various institutions whose administrative cooperation and understanding of project goals and methods were essential to successful project goal attainment. A PA could help make clear to such representatives that the project's activities were coherent with the basic mission of the EPDA Exceptional Child Program, and that the project director's requests for cooperation from the institution should be viewed as part of a nationwide action program rather than as the strivings of a self-serving individual. Many project directors also liked being able to use the PA in meetings with important institutional representatives and other influential persons to bring them accounts of the prevailing thought and activities around the country. Such meetings sometimes stimulated better understanding of project intent and generated new opportunities for joint action. It is noteworthy that during the original discussions on setting up the project advocate system, the emphasis had been on professional-technical assistance to clarify basic theory, training strategies, technology, evaluation designs, and the like, rather than on social-political influence.

Federal agency personnel, LTI staff, the LTI Developmental Assistance Committee, and project directors already were keenly aware that projects frequently do not have an impact on institutions

although the impact may have been a major purpose of the federal funding program. All too often, the presence of a change-directed project was cited as evidence of the institution's intention to modify its practices, when it was faced with criticisms of rigidity, yet successful project results were seldom incorporated into basic institutional practices. For example, regular elementary or secondary teacher trainers in a host institution, in many cases, were only minimally aware of the EPDA project's findings or they were unwilling, for various reasons, to change their programs to accord with the findings if they knew about them, despite the fact that experienced regular teachers trained under the EPDA project reported their experience to be very helpful and urged that the training be included in the preservice preparation. Indeed, teachers trained in the projects often found themselves returning to unchanged school situations in which they were limited in applying what they had learned.

Another PA function which the project directors considered valuable was to ask searching questions of institutional agents whom the project director could not approach with equal frankness for fear of alienating the very people on whose support (s)he was dependent day after day. A PA could also be more successful than a project director in urging legitimate change in an institution simply because the project director was already a part of the institution and, thus, her/his opinion seemed to carry less weight.

The PA role was designed to have no influence on the funding of specific projects. However, since the PA was encouraged to report overall impressions, which were based on experience with a number of projects, to the LTI and the Bureau program officer, the reports became an important source of data for the formulation of operating policies and strategies. It is possible that this aspect of the PA role gave her/him greater influence in intra-as well as interinstitutional discussions. However, it seems more likely that the influence was based on accepted professional peer group standards because most of the PAs had long-standing national visibility in special education. Beneficiaries of PA service were well aware that the primary job identification of the PA was not with a particular federal program or an administrative bureaucracy but the education profession at large. Under the conditions governing PA service, it is possible that the influence of the PA rested in the role of "professional conscience," a role that might be more powerful in the long run than the power of an administrative authority or a financial resource broker of predictable instability. The history of shifting federal policies had given funding agencies such a reputation.

Credibility is added to the hypothesis that "peer group conscience" was the primary source of the PA role authority by one of the more frequent suggestions for improving the project advocate system. A number of project directors urged more careful matching of PAs to projects. Some directors recommended that they be permitted to participate in the assignment of PAs or, at the minimum, that they be given the right to suggest or reject the assignment of a PA. This recommendation, and the

recommendations that PAs be able to spend more time in project visits to gain a more detailed understanding of the problems, and that they provide more follow-up assistance, were among the most frequently suggested improvements. A high value was placed, obviously, on strong professional support.

Despite the recommendation for better matching of PA and project, geography (ease of accessibility for the PA) remained the primary determinant of assignment, except for the one LTI staff member who specialized in situations of community involvement in educational processes. Initially, the LTI lacked the intimate knowledge of the projects and their personnel to attempt PA matches, and later, when the matching might have been possible, the remaining limited period of operations for both the project advocate and the projects made matching infeasible.

A number of directors urged that PA services be made available to projects "as early as at the pre-planning stage." The LTI experiences supported this suggestion. Indeed, the LTI Developmental Assistance Committee had already recommended that the LTI hold conferences for future project applicants to help them understand the purposes of the EPDA Exceptional Child Program and to assist them in formulating mission-compatible, testable objectives, better implementation strategies, and stronger evaluation designs. The recommendations could not be acted on, however, because of the federal agency's policy not to fund new projects under the Exceptional Child Program. Yet the recommendations to provide early consultation service could be applied to projects funded under other programs. Early service will help to incorporate the purposes and findings of the EPDA Exceptional Child Program in all personnel training efforts which are funded in the future.

The reports indicated that most of the functions predicted for the PAs were carried out in varying degrees. Outside consultants were brought in for some projects; PAs arranged for project directors and staff to visit other projects which had successfully dealt with similar problems; and PAs assisted project directors or other staff members to attend short-term training institutes focusing on such problems as the design of training programs, community relations problems, evaluation design, and so forth.

During the first year of operations, the PAs were not able to visit all projects although they did come to know all project directors through telephone conversations, conference meetings, or comparable opportunities. The reasons were manifold. The PAs were only part-time consultants who owed primary time and allegiance to home institutions. They had to invest most of the first year in becoming familiar with the characteristics and needs of projects and establishing relationships with project staffs, which was time consuming. And much time was required in the beginning phases to clarify the potential role of the PA and to become familiar with the entire program. The expectations were that in the second year of operations there would be a greater use of the consultation service in one form or another as both PAs and project directors became better able to pinpoint specific project needs.

The project advocate system had many possibilities that could not be tested because of circumstances. For one thing, the system was introduced after most projects had been in operation for more than a year. There was little opportunity to test the value of early PA involvement in project planning because two months after the start of the PA system, a policy decision was made at the federal level that the Exceptional Child Program, along with several others, would be discontinued as a separate entity and would be combined with other EPDA programs to permit a better coordinated total push toward educational staff improvements. Thus, all projects served by PAs were terminated, a number closing out each year until 1975 when the funding would be phased out. Although project activities could be continued under other funding, the PAs would not have a logical basis for continuing the systematic relationship. Naturally, the policy shift raised project staff concerns about funding to a high level and, in some cases, these concerns overshadowed considerations of technical quality. Many projects, therefore, may have been led to use less technical assistance than they might have requested otherwise.

Second year: 1972-1973

On the basis of the 1973 responses of project directors and PAs, there was little reason to modify the conclusions reached at the end of the first year. Although continuing projects were visited less often by PAs during the second year in comparison with the first, project directors still believed the project advocate system to be a valuable service that merited continuation. At the end of the second year, the project directors' judgment appeared to be based on the services actually enabled by the PAs rather than on the physical presence of the PAs.

The lower number of personal visits during the second year was not unexpected. It had been anticipated that as PAs became familiar with the specific needs of projects during the first year they would recommend other consultants with special expertise in specific areas who could be sent to the projects through LTI resources to meet the project's needs, or they would recommend the use of LTI resources to help project staff visit other projects to see how problems were being solved. In a high proportion of cases, the anticipated actions occurred; non visitation by the PA was not synonymous with non service, however.

In other cases, the rate of project visitation was high because the PA met special requirements by visiting a project repeatedly. When the projects received neither PA visits nor specific assistance, it was because either the funding was terminating in 1973 and the projects' primary problems were to work out state or local funding for continuation, or the projects were among those that were most capably staffed and had less need for outside assistance. The prospect of the loss of funding engendered manifest discouragement in many projects. The conviction appeared to be almost universal, however, that the projects had shown that the opportunities for exceptional children within educational mainstream could be promoted through the kinds of training that the EPDA Exceptional

Child Program had made available to regular educators. The majority of staff members leaving projects because of the termination of funding were seeking and obtaining positions in other programs where they could use their project experience to carry forward the work. They had proved, to their own satisfaction at least, that regular education teachers were willing and able to learn to work with exceptional children.

In general, the second year's experience seemed to confirm that many forms of developmental assistance are needed as well as some flexible process that will effectively relate staff development needs and staff learning opportunities. The project advocate system proved to serve those purposes. Under other circumstances, some other system might be more suitable. Staff apparently sense their needs for continuous growth in competence and appreciate the tangible recognition of the needs that the project advocate system provided.

Implications

The indications of this limited experience with a personalized technical assistance service suggest that there is merit in providing technical or developmental assistance to projects to increase their probability of success. The director and staff of a project that aims to reform some aspect of education are in a stressful position--as is any person or unit attempting to change the established order. Short-term or one-shot consultation can seldom provide the continuing moral and psychological support, technical help, and follow through that can be provided by someone who stays with a project and shares a measure of responsibility for its success. We saw the same phenomenon operating which many EPDA Exceptional Children projects observed in trying to help regular class teachers become more skillful in meeting the needs of deviant learners: It is not enough to have learned the skills; translating the knowledge into practice under continually changing and often inhospitable conditions is a frustrating business. It helps to have someone available who can provide a detached perspective, analyze the problem in terms of attainable remedies, and develop strategies for making an effort more productive.

At the school and college levels, the appreciation of the need for ongoing technical support to teachers had led to the use of an advocate type of person to perform back-up functions. Some models of these functions were developed with the aid of EPDA Exceptional Child and BEH training program funding and are described in a monograph (Deno, 1972). It appears that it would be profitable to provide the same kinds of support to projects aimed at educational improvement that we provide in school systems trying to improve their services to individual children.

If it is true that much of the PA's influence resides in the degree of professional conscience (s)he can arouse, then persons who have earned a solid reputation as thoughtful, competent workers in their fields are likely to be more influential in the project-advocate-type role than less experienced persons, however charismatic or winning their personalities. If, indeed, the credibility of

the person functioning in the role is a central factor in its influence, then the role is not one into which persons can be inserted as if they were interchangeable parts. The person must be able to maintain respect through demonstrations of ability to help the project over a considerable period of time.

Perhaps because of the nature of most of the projects, the PAs described here who had had direct experience in the administration of public school programs and in college-level training programs seem to have provided more direct, specified help to projects. They seemed able to help the project bridge the ivory tower-firing line gap. This experience combination would seem to be a desirable set of qualifications for any program designed to improve the training of personnel to function more effectively in public school settings.

It continues to seem desirable for the PA to carry out assignments on a part-time basis and to maintain a responsible position in the professional field as her/his major role. One suspects that if a PA were full time, (s)he might lose some credibility as "someone who is daily struggling with the same kinds of frustrating forces as we are" (statement of a project director). Furthermore, a full-time cadre of PAs might quickly acquire the image (and the reality) of another bureaucracy, another management establishment, intent on building up its own power base and generating its own difficult-to-limit life span.

When the operation and the persons working in it do not have tenure, the focus is kept on the principle that strategies can take many forms depending on circumstances. If we really believe that education must continually be re-formed, then the project advocate system should exemplify the belief. It is probably relevant that PAs were able to establish themselves as helpers and not as police, although the evidence was ample initially for disbelief to occur. The conviction that the PA role was truly to help came with the consistent behaviors of the PAs. A model in action speaks louder than words.

On the basis of the project advocate system, it would seem wise to bring supportive help into the picture early in a project's life and to keep it available throughout the life of the project. Federal agencies would do well to secure the aid of people with the described experience in developing program policies, writing guidelines for proposal development, and the like, and then to use the people to help funded projects to refine their plans. The responsible conduct of projects as experiments in reform is complicated and adequate technology is seldom available. To say that an applicant should not be funded if (s)he does not have the necessary competence to run the project fails to recognize that projects must be conceived and executed as the means of building a better data base for future service decisions. Until we develop better means of assessing the impact of different efforts we will need to rely on the judgments of thoughtful, experienced people and, perhaps more importantly, to build such people into monitoring and support systems.

Summary

Trying to modify the ponderous system of public education is a formidable task which is complicated by the lack of consensus on the purposes of education and deficient knowledge of how tc achieve even those goals that are agreed upon. Providing technical assistance turns out to be not just a matter of disseminating established information but a problem of technically, socially, and psychologically supporting a search for better ways of doing things.

People working in research and for educational change are in stressful activities. They need to test their assumptions and sharpen their insights at the same time that they are trying to help others increase their understanding and competence. Projects aiming to produce systematic change in a system seem to need help in the following three areas:

1. Political--relating to the structures of the organizations to be changed and the attitudes of the people whose sanction is required to allow change to occur.

2. Substantive--relating to the specific disciplines or subject matters to be included in the effort.

3. Leadership--relating to the way they carry out their functions as change agents and knowledge developers.

This conclusion confirms the predictions of the BEPD Task Force on Technical Assistance (BEPD, 1972).

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Essential Elements in the Delivery of Technical Assistance

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In reading Toffler's book, Future Shock, and Weiner and Kahn's book, The Year 2000, I was impressed with the relation of some of their thinking to the concept of leadership training institutes (LTIs) or support systems. The LTI, it appears to me, is a prime example of what Toffler refers to as "adhocracy." Then, as I started to write this paper, I began to wonder where the concept of the LTI came from in the first place. Did it really emerge full blown from the mouth of Sidney Marland in 1970? I am sure that most of us have not had the idea of LTIs in our vocabularies for more than three or four years at most. The same statement can be made for the concept of technical assistance delivery systems or support systems in education.

The rise of the ad hoc organization is a direct result of the accelerated rate of change in our society. When everything was relatively stable in special education, 5, 6, 7, or 8 years ago, we did not need LTIs. We were rather smug about what we thought we knew then. However, as societal pressures for change have multiplied and appear to be resisting our best efforts to guide them, new organizational structures have been needed to handle these forces. In order to get a handle on the problems, industry, government, and now education have resorted to the project or task force approach. Most of us remember when we started attacking some of our problems by assigning task forces. I did not realize then that it was an omen of things to come, of the creation of yet more ad hoc committees or approaches to the solution of targeted problems of a temporary nature. We have learned from industry the value of creating disposable divisions--the organizational equivalent of throw-away tissues. Thus, our support systems are temporary, finite, non routine organizations brought together to grapple with non routine, perhaps one-of-a-kind, problems. The concept of the LTI appears to be the result of an effort to tackle the non routine problems which are being presented to us right now in all the areas represented at this conference.

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The acceleration of change in the field of special education, as we attempt to educate the handicapped for roles in a society we cannot even visualize, within the very recent past has called for the LTI to provide a new dimension in our organizational structure. Because of the novelty of the concept it seems wise to delineate those elements that seem most viable in each of the support systems and to attempt to define the nature of an effective LTI which is charged with the responsibility of delivering technical assistance on a short-term basis.

Evolutionary-Developmental Nature of LTIs

The Leadership Training Institute in Learning Disabilities (LTI-LD) is now in its third year of funding. The first year was quite different from the third year, and rightfully so. Perhaps a look at its evolving pattern will give an idea of the directions in which the area of learning disabilities (LD) is moving.

During the first year, the LTI-LD proposed to review the literature and come up with a state-of-the-Art document that would cover research, administrative and service arrangements, and training programs. At that time, our area was young enough so that a data base was needed. Thus, a great deal of the first year was spent in gathering a data base upon which we could proceed to provide technical assistance to the Child Service Demonstration Programs (CSDPs). Since only eight CSDPs were funded that first year, our technical assistance demands were limited and we had the time and the energy to do a thorough search.

In the second year, the demands for technical assistance increased as the projects grew to 23. The major effort was moved from the collection of data as a knowledge base to the intensive delivery of services to the projects. We also found that the needs of the LD area, as opposed to the circumscribed needs of the projects funded under Title VI-G, were beginning to emerge. As a result, we began to focus on the dissemination-of-information needs of both the LD area and the projects. This focus led us, for example, into a conference for non-funded states. The needs of the LD area were intensive enough for us to broaden our focus by helping projects which were not funded to write better proposals.

We continued to expand the information dissemination role of the LTI during the third year. At that time we were funded for three components: technical assistance, which has been consistent from the beginning; formal training; and evaluation/research. After our first two years of delivering technical assistance, it was our feeling that we needed a problem-solving agency within our technical assistance organization which could attack the specific problems that were being presented to us for which no easy answers were available. For example, how do you measure teacher change? This problem kept coming up over and over again in our technical assistance delivery to the projects. Rather than

trying to pretend that there were easy answers to the measurement of teacher or child or parent change, we proposed and were funded for a problem-solving component--our Evaluation Research Component(ERC). It has been continued this year, and we are involved currently in either library search, specific research, or data collection on nine very difficult problems that are facing the LD area right now.

In terms of the developmental or evolutionary nature of the LTI, I can see that this problem-solving component needs to be emphasized even more specifically as we decentralize technical assistance. As we begin again to look toward the future, the decentralization of support systems emerges as an obvious need to provide consistency and availability to the projects. The effort to move technical assistance closer to the CSDPs in each state appears to call for closer alignment with state departments of education.

Support systems must be responsive to the area or changing needs of the projects they serve. A dynamic, responsive support system appears to be an essential element in the delivery of technical assistance.

Identification of the Consumer

The LTI-LD is inclined to talk less of clients than some LTIs and more of consumers, because we see ourselves in that kind of a relationsihp with our projects. In our situation it has been relatively simple to answer the question, "Who is entitled to our technical assistance?" because all of the grants have been made to state departments of education. This year, contracts for Child Service Demonstration Centers have been available to other agencies, so the question of who is entitled to service will become complicated. Departments of education are seen in most of our states as flow-through agencies that subcontract either formally or informally to a local education agency, in most cases. Thus, technical assistance is appropriately delivered not to the state department of education but to the local education agency or cooperative group operating the model center. However, service to the local agency may invite direct service to the teacher out there in the classroom, who probably needs our specific services more than the state department does. After we have gone full circle in our considerations of who is the consumer of our technical assistance, we are back to the state department, because built into all of our projects is a replication strategy. There is no way that that project is going to be replicated within the state unless very specific technical assistance is given to the state department.

A support system appears to have a variety of consumers with conflicting needs, goals, and expectations. The high level of expectation of each creates unique problems which must be solved. As I relate to our projects in the LD area, I feel that the expectations are for the LTI to become a source of a new kind of productive capability: one that is alive with intelligence and information

so that it is completely flexible in its ultimate performance. The LTI, it seems to me, is the one "adhocracy" with the capability of responding to the increasing pressure for change in the special education structure. Yet, when I look at what people expect of us, I am literally appalled. Because the LTI-LD staff is made up of fallible human beings trying to do a job, perhaps too much is expected of us. On the other hand, the more that is expected of us, the more dimensions we seem to be able to explore. The solution involves a careful answer to the question of whose expectations we are funded to meet, and what is the primary purpose of an LTI.

Consultative, Nonregulatory Nature of LTI

Because we are consultative and nonregulatory, we are not involved in the selection of projects. We are funded to provide the very best technical assistance we can to the projects that are selected by someone else. The projects come in many shapes and sizes and in varying degrees of viability. The basic problem which we all share is that some projects are nonviable when they are selected. No amount of technical assistance can effect enough change to help such projects become effective, probably. If we then have project failure, is it, in fact, a failure of the support system? If project success is the basis on which the support system is being evaluated, then do we, in some way, need to get involved in project selection? I do not have an answer to this question but I am sure that none of us would want to stand or fall on the basis of some of the funded projects. On the other hand, if we get involved in project selection we become involved also in the funding process, and we become regulatory and destroy whatever it is that we feel is such an essential characteristic of the technical assistance relationship. I am not sure that that problem can be resolved, but it is an important element and needs consideration.

Internal Consistency with Host Institutions

I found out very quickly that our LTI-LD was not internally consistent with the primary goals and objectives of our host institution, the University. Many universities view their primary function as the advancement of knowledge. Generally speaking, a major university sees the advancement of knowledge as preceding research, training, and service, with service very far down the priority list. A whole series of questions is raised about the location of a support system. Is the university the most viable host institution for a service agency such as a LTI? If it is not, what are the alternatives? Of course, one possibility is a private nonprofit educational structure which is tangential to a university or a state or local education agency. I do not see a really good answer in any of them, however, Certainly, neither a state nor local education agency can be a viable host for a LTI which is national in scope.

The other option is to pick the university very carefully, that is, to find which one values

service functions, at least at the same level that research and training functions are valued. I am not sure that such a university exists. I am not sure that any of you have found a way in which the goals of your LTI or support system can be brought into internal consistency with those of your host institution. The problem is extremely critical and, at the very least, we all need to address and be aware of it.

Realistic Delineation of Objectives on a Long-Term Basis

We have been funded on a year-to-year basis and find that it is very difficult to learn to look down the pike five years ahead when we do not know whether we will get past this year. So the realistic delineation of objectives on a long-range basis is a difficult problem. We have had an expanding horizon to which we have decided to respond because of the novelty of the LD area. If you are in an area of concern which is as new as learning disabilities, it seems imperative to explore different options that may require the adjustment of long-term objective. Mid-course corrections may be more necessary than meeting long-range objectives that have ceased to reflect the needs of the area in which you are working.

Multiple-Year Funding

Certainly, multiple-year funding has been hit hard enough by both Gallagher and Stedman so that I do not need to say a great deal about it. We have found with our institution, as well as the projects we serve, that year-to-year funding gives you six months for gearing up and six months for going out of business, and somehow or other you must have some time to perform a service function. Multiple-year funding must be worked out. All of the funding agencies are, apparently, becoming aware of its importance.

Staffing Problems

Staffing problems, of course, are related to the temporary nature of funding. Somehow or another, we in the support systems must be able to attract the strongest personnel. In an ad hoc organization with short-term funding, attracting such people is difficult. One solution is to recruit persons who may be able to get leaves of absence from other universities where they are on tenure. We have been able to employ some extremely strong staff members in this way. Yet this way of attracting competent people for programs with temporary funding has some negative ramifications: Personnel changes occur every year or two and the frequent changes of staff may vitiate the program's functions. Another option is to award the grant for the support system to a university that will release a tenured person who has stature in her/his field to work for the support system for the length of its existence. This procedure provides continuity, which is especially critical for the director of the program.

Another option is to employ people who will continue in their positions at the university and direct the support system on a part-time basis. Obvious disadvantages can be seen in this alternative. The whole staffing problem is tied to the temporary nature of current funding; it can be resolved, but it must be resolved in a direct way.

Staffing Patterns

At our LTI-LD, we fell into a staffing pattern as our function evolved, and I am not sure that it is the most viable staffing pattern with which we could have come up. As I look very carefully at the staffing patterns of other support systems, I find that each is quite unique. At the LTI-LD, we are working specifically toward differentiated staffing aimed at the needs of our projects. Indeed, we have staffed specifically to meet those needs. However, I wonder if the stated needs of the CSDCs may not reflect the abilities of our staff persons who were available the first year we did the needs assessment. For example, the basic competencies of some of our staff members are in research and evaluation. Therefore, the greatest needs reflected by our projects are for help in evaluation. Perhaps if we did not have such strong staffing in research and evaluation, our projects would not ask us for help in these dimensions, but would buy the services elsewhere with the consultant funds which are written into their projects. We also have a great deal of strength in fiscal management, so we get involved in fiscal management problems, which we might not be involved in if we did not have that kind of personnel available. We have strength in teaching and inservice support, in personnel whose basic skills are in classroom teaching and organizing and developing programs at the local school level. We have a great deal of strength in diagnosis and assessment support services; of course, we get a lot of requests for these services. We also have a great deal of strength in language development; this year, we are getting a great many more specific requests for help in this subject. I do not know whether the requests from projects reflect the development of the LD area or the kind of competencies possessed by our staff.

Identification and Delivery of Needed Technical Assistance

The needs assessment that was done with projects indicated 23 problem areas in which help was needed.

Personnel recruitment

Coordination of internal services

Record keeping and retrieval systems

Definition and incidence of population

Selection or screening procedures

Selection of diagnostic procedures and assessment procedures and materials

Selection of instructional materials

General curriculum development

Modification or operation of the multiplier strategy

Total communications

Interagency cooperation

Problems with project revision

Unspecified problems

Internal personnel problems

Future financing problems

Staff training, theory and rationale

Multiplier strategies-replication capabilities

Organizational patterns for delivery of services

Inservice training for nonstaff personnel, teachers in the field

Parent programs

Project evaluations

Total communications to the field--dissemination "flow thru"

Problems with the model in general

Five areas were identified as needing the most attention.

1. In August, the project personnel thought that the greatest need they were going to have was exactly what we would have anticipated--project evaluation. Apparently, the whole idea of accountability and evaluation is causing problems all over the country. Thus, competence in research and evaluation is necessary for LTI staffs. Prior planning and consultation on evaluation can avoid a great many problems for the projects.

2. One of the functions that seems to be needed more and more is the dissemination of information. Since the LTI-LD is perceived as being a fount of knowledge on learning disabilities, the information dissemination function has become increasingly important. It has expanded from a supply of printed publications into audio- and videotapes. One of our most needed services under the broad heading of communications, we decided, is the dissemination of what we consider worth while current papers which the LD area needs now, not a year after they are published. Therefore, we initiated a Preview Series of papers, written by many people, which we feel need to be read and heard. We have a limited list covering the training programs, model center programs, and people who have asked to receive our mailings.

3. The next most needed form of technical assistance is in multiplier or replication strategy. All our projects are committed to multiplying themselves within their states, but none know how to do it without additional funds. They are sitting there with federal funds trying to sell the projects to the other school districts, but the latter do not have any federal dollars. Many of the projects, especially those in their second year of operation, have asked for help with the multiplier strategy.

4. Some of the second-year projects also needed help with problems of future financing and planning in order to institutionalize the projects.

5. Many people in the LD area are concerned with organizational patterns for the delivery of services. However, they have little concern about the definitions and incidences of the population to be served. Yet I feel that definition and incidence data are the major problems in the LD area.

Our LTI-LD has conceptualized the delivery of technical assistance to CSDCs as a serve-system

involving planning modification, feedback, revision, evaluation, and review. Our flow chart (Fig. 1) presents the process.

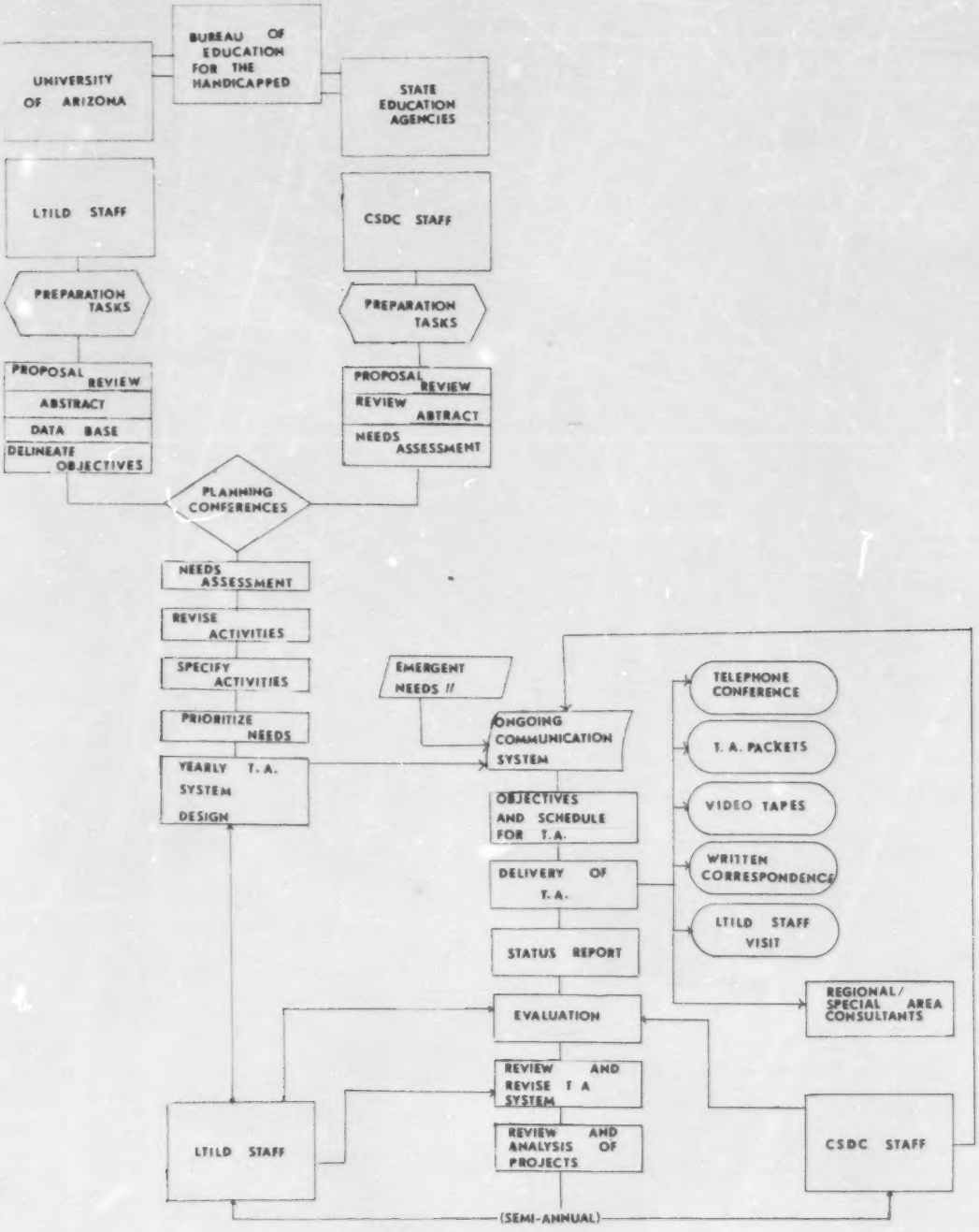

Figure 1. Technical assistance delivery system flowchart.

After careful preparatory work by both the LTI-LD and CSDC staffs, in which the newly funded proposal is reviewed or revised, an abstract is written for dissemination to other projects at the first planning conference. At the same time, the basic demographic data are collated onto a summative chart which becomes our Data Base for answering questions of how many or what kind or what age. How many urban projects? How many secondary centers? How many involving blacks or Indians or others? Each proposal is studied carefully to delineate the specific objectives to which the CSDC will address itself. Specific needs are tentatively identified by CSDC staffs.

With this preparation, both the CSDC and LTI-LD staffs are prepared for the Planning Conference which is held in four sites during August. At this point, the needs assessment is sharpened, objectives may be revised, activities delineated, and needs given a priority order. The technical assistance system design is then agreed upon by the LTI-LD and CSDC staffs. Throughout the year, frequent interactions increase the ability of the LTI-LD staff to respond to the needs of the project. Service is given through printed materials, by telephone, through videotapes, and, most importantly, during personal visits. Continuity is maintained by the assignment of regional coordinators who plan with the CSDC director for the sequential delivery of technical assistance by other LTI-LD staff, special area consultants, or other CSDC staff members. This system provides for long-range planning without sacrificing responsiveness to the emergent needs of the Centers. The important element is the specification of a system which permits all concerned persons to understand the mechanics of the delivery of assistance. The model for each support system will differ because each is concerned with different problems. A flow chart can be constructed for any model, however.

Conclusion

Nine elements in the delivery of technical assistance have been identified by the LTI-LD staff as critical in the planning and function of a support system. Solutions can be found for some of the problems, but others may not be resolvable except on a one-to-one basis. Perhaps, as we react to the needs in our areas of operations, we will be so caught up in the excitement of each new challenge that we will find better ways of serving children. The problems should be catalysts for action.

A Project to Help States Plan and Implement Programs for the Gifted and the Talented

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In the latter part of 1971, the scates of California and Illinois submitted a proposal to the U. S. Commissioner of Education for the support of training activities to help states expand their planning capabilities in relation to programs and provisions for gifted and talented children. A revised version of this proposal was funded in June 1972 was the National/State Leadership Training Institute for the Gifted and the Talented.

The project planners had some knowledge of the history of planning efforts at the state level in both California and Illinois and they were impressed by the costs in time and money which are required to conduct experimental projects, prepare draft plans, seek critical review by the public, revise the plans, seek financial support from the state governments, and implement the plans in the schools. In seeking a more economical approach, they examined materials on the dissemination and utilization of knowledge in educational fields which were coming out of the Center for Research on the Utilization of Scientific Knowledge at the University of Michigan.

Some of the strategies and assumptions employed by the LTI Gifted and Talented planners were described in an early proposal (March 1972) as follows:

> In his work, Planning for Innovation through Dissemination and Utilization of Knowledge (Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1971), Ronald Havelock grouped the major theoretical and empirical studies of knowledge dissemination and utilization in three general categories: (1) the Research, Development and Diffusion Perspective, (2) the Social Interaction Perspective and (3) the Problem Solver Perspective. While each of these viewpoints is useful for the purpose of the LTI, the social interaction (S-I) perspective seems best suited to the combination of educational and policy-planning tasks which characterize the LTI.
>
> An examination of some of the major points of social interaction theory will illustrate why this is so. Each point is discussed briefly below.

1. The Importance of the Social Relations Network.

Sometimes R and D oriented policy makers seem to assume that the best innovations diffuse by themselves or that new ideas can be conveyed through publications or other mass media alone. S-I theorists present a far more complex picture of diffusion processes.

2. The User's Position in the Network.

Beginning with their identification of opinion leaders, key individuals who are most influential in gaining community acceptance of new ideas and practices, S-I theorists have proceeded to identify other social system positions which relate in specific ways to the diffusion process. Innovators, laggards, early majority are examples.

3. The Significance of Informal Personal Relationships and Contacts.

Havelock says, the opinion leader is an important force in societal diffusion because he has a lot of friendly personal contacts with other members, and even he depends largely on word-of-mouth communication with local innovators and outside experts in building his own inventory of new ideas and practices. For the all-important stages of evaluation (deciding whether or not an innovation ought to be adopted) personal sources seem to be the most significant for all adopters.

4. The Individual's Group Identity and Group Loyalty.

Reference group identification plays a central role in diffusion as examined by the S-I school. People tend to adopt and maintain attitudes and behaviors which they perceive as normative for their psychological reference group.

5. The Essential Irrelevance of the Size of the Adopting Unit.

Havelock notes the prevalence of criticism of S-I theory by educators who believe that only individuals adopters (farmers, Doctors) have been studies, whereas in education the school or school system is the adopter. Havelock calls this belief categorically false, because examination of extensive literature reviews in the S-I field reveals great diversity in the size of adopter units, which have been studies, ranging in size from individuals to small groups, to industrial firms and even the whole group fo 50 states. Further, this literature shows a remarkable consistency across settings.

As might be expected of planners with the S-I orientation, the LTI/Gifted and Talented managers sought to encourage states to establish planning teams whose members represent different groups. For example, in a section of the 1973 summer LTI brochure, the composition of state teams was described as follows:

Full-Time Participants	Part-Time Participants (Sunday--Wednesday)
A. State Team	A. State Team
State education agency gifted and talented director.	State education agency decision-making level officer.
Local education agency representative.	Optional team member legislator (state or federal).
Two or more chosen from the following: College or university. Private sector. Parents. State or local school board.	Governor's staff member. Well-known gifted and talented adults. News media representative.

Attending the first national summer Leadership Training Institute at Squaw Valley, California, July 8-20, 1973, were 16 state teams, one territorial team, and one regional team (79 individuals). Written state plans were received from Alabama, American Samoa, Arizona, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, and DHEW Region Five. An evaluation report prepared by Operations Research, Inc. indicated that 80% of the participants felt comfortable with their state position papers, and 87% felt that the state plans they developed were workable.

Enrollment to date at the second national LTI/Gifted and Talented conference, scheduled for June 23-July 3, 1974, in Wilmington, North Carolina, includes 14 state teams, two regional teams, two teams from the largest city school systems--New York City and Los Angeles--and Ottawa, Canada.

A second LTI/Gifted and Talented objective is to contribute to better public and professional awareness of the needs of gifted and talented children. Three examples of our activities may be cited in pursuit of this objective.

1. In cooperation with the Illinois Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the LTI has produced and is distributing a 27-minute documentary film, "More Than a Glance," about a black girl with unusual talents in drama and music, and the influences that helped her succeed.

2. The National Conference on the Disadvantaged Gifted was co-sponsored by the Association of California School Administrators and the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office. Thirty authorities on the education of disadvantaged gifted, including culturally different, economically deprived, female, and rural, worked in small groups with 350 conferees.

3. Parent-administrator-board member conferences were held in Columbia, Maryland and San Diego, California in the spring of 1974. Three member teams from 47 communities participated.

The LTI/Gifted and Talented has published training materials dealing with identification, program development and examples, and a matrix for developing a state plan. A handbook for parents is in preparation. These materials became available for distribution in June 1974.

Follow-up and Evaluation

Table 1 summarizes follow-up data from the first summer institute, based on telephone interviews conducted 5-6 months after the institute.

During its first year, the LTI was evaluated through a contract with Operations Research, Inc. of Silver Springs, Maryland.[1] Data from this evaluation of the first summer institute were employed in planning the second institute. A copy of a summary of ORI's evaluation is attached (Table 1).

Beginning with the second year of the LTI, external evaluation will be provided by Elsbery Systems Analysis of New York. This evaluation will include an economic analysis that seeks to examine changes in the allocation of state resources to the gifted and talented over an extended period of time.

Table 1

Twelve-State Follow-up:

National/State Leadership Training

Institute for the Gifted and Talented

Official Acceptance / State	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Increase in SEA staff commitment	YES	YES	?	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES
Direct contact with the CSSO	YES	New Cmr TBA	Brief	YES	YES	YES	YES	New Cmr TBA	YES	YES	YES	YES
Plan placed before SBE and approved	NO	exp. 1-74	NO	YES	DNA	DNA	exp. 1-74	NO	NO	YES	exp. 2-74	NO
Bill prepared and introduced in Legislature	NO	YES	DNA	Budget	DNA	YES	NO	NO	Exist Spec.	DNA	DNA	Planned
Legislation passed	NO	NO	DNA	Req.	'72	NO	NO	NO	Educ. Legis.*	'71	DNA	NO
Special State funding available	NO	NO	NO		YES	NO	NO	NO	Req.	YES	YES	NO
Estimated total amount of funding	--	--	--	1/2 Million Requested	700,000	--	--	--	--	40,000	40,000	--

Outreach and Implementation												
Statewide parents association	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Awareness conference	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
State or regional LTI	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Foundation grants	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Research projects	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
College and university participation	SOME	SOME	V. LT.	SOME	GOOD	LIT	LIT	LIT	LIT	GOOD	LIT	V.LIT.
Business and industry involvement	NO	YES	NO	SOME	NO	NO	NO	NO	SOME	NO	SOME	LIT

Key: * = Existing special education legislation. CSSO = Cheif state school officer. DNA = Does not apply--legislation in effect. exp. = Expected. LIT. = Little. TBA = To be appointed. V. LIT. = Very little.

Source:

David M. Jackson, December 1973.

Evolution of a Support System: The Leadership Training Institute/Special Education

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The Leadership Training Institute/Special Education (LTI/SE) has been supported through funds from the Exceptional Child Branch of the Bureau of Educational Professions Development (recently, the National Center for Improvement of Educational Systems), U.S. Office of Education, and has been centered at the University of Minnesota since the establishment of the Bureau of Educational Professions Development (BEPD) in 1968 under the Education Professions Development Act (EPDA). Maynard C. Reynolds is the Director and Principal Investigator. Throughout its existence, the LTI/SE has engaged in a constant search for better definition and formulation of its role as a support system to client programs which are directed to the training of regular education personnel (teachers, administrators, support personnel) to improve their capabilities to work with exceptional children.

In this paper, the background and experiences of the LTI/SE are described generally in the framework of an evolution from a basically experimental program for assistance to federal projects to a kind of national support system for federally sponsored programs serving exceptional children. Most of the attention, consequently, is focused on the beginnings, a time when the very notion and feasibility of federal support systems was viewed by many persons with open skepticism. The major functions around which the LTI/SE is organized are subsumed under the following topics: background and general orientation; organization and structure; federal supports; search for a mission; technical/development assistance: training conferences, technical assistance, publications, materials development, and dissemination; linkages to other agencies; and special projects.

Background and General Orientation

As a project supported through BEPD funds, the LIT/SE must be considered within the particular scope of the BEPD mission and purposes. Other papers (Davies and Deno) in this report provide full details on EPDA. Given the context of the EPDA, at least four identifiable factors significantly influenced or permitted the development and growth of a system of the nature of the LTI/SE: (a) the role and responsibilities of the Exceptional Child Branch of the BEPD; (b) the open definition given by BEPD to the LTI entities at their creation; (c) the current needs of the professional field which was

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to be served by the LTI/SE; and (d) the pattern of LTI leadership at local and federal levels. Each factor has had strong bearing on the shaping of the LTI/SE into its present form.

1. The Exceptional Child Program Branch was not legislated specifically when BEPD was formulated but, rather, was created through careful agreement of the heads of the two federal bureaus whose concerns were most relevant to education for handicapped children: the BEPD and the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH). The agreement, drawn up in May 1968, allocated specific training areas to each, and BEPD voluntarily set aside 15 per cent of all funds for the purpose. The context of the agreement is action by Congress to create "set-asides" for the handicapped in several other federal programs. Nevertheless, it is clear that the BEPD leadership had genuine interests in extending its programs to the handicapped and was not simply responding to pressures. The agreement reads, in part, as follows:

> The training and retraining of personnel who work directly and exclusively with populations of handicapped children will be supported primarily by Bureau of Education for the Handicapped programs. The training of regular educational personnel including such specialities as counselors, educational technology specialists, and others with an interest in the special problems presented by the handicapped will be primarily supported by programs under the Bureau of Educational Personnel Department. This may include the support of programs devoted entirely to the problems of handicapped children or programs including units on this subject among other elements. The BEPD also will be receptive to proposals for training educational aides who will be working both exclusively or in part with handicapped children. The BEPD encourages the training of teams, including teachers, aides, administrators and other specialized personnel to cope with the problems of handicapped children. (Gallagher - Davies Agreement, May 1968.)

The result of this agreement was an Exceptional Child Program created through executive arrangement with a broad charge not only to relate to the several programs within the one Bureau (BEPD), but also to plan and conduct its activities with sensitivity with an entirely separate organization (BEH). The initial delicacy of the situation is apparent; over time, the LTI/SE in its activities has been mindful of this cooperative relationship between the two federal bureaus and, in fact, has sought to strengthen it.

2. At BEPD the notion of "Leadership Training Institutes" was new and the proliferation of LTIs was impressive: an LTI was created for each of the 12 or so program units. The creation of LTIs was an unusual, challenging, and creative step for federal offices; probably the one unifying characteristic of the new entities was the absence of guidelines suggesting a course for the development of purposes and objectives. As Deno points out in her paper, the funding patterns for the LTIs were on the same schedules and scales as the training programs, but specific performance expectations were omitted, perhaps deliberately, to permit growth in ways that would be useful to the projects/clients served by the LTIs. Given a general authorization to develop a support system to serve a particular EPDA program area, each LTI took on the task of framing its own mission and role; this paper, however, is concerned only with the evolution of the LTI in special education.

3. The training needs of professional special educators are massive, complex, and critical. Although a discussion of the status of the field may not be germane to the subject of support systems,

it can provide the context for the LTI/SE efforts. Briefly, the field of special education was (and is) filled with turmoil, an urgency for action, sore needs for assistance in the identification of resources (materials and personnel) and for leadership in developing both inservice and preservice training programs, and a need for immediate aid in sharing teaching skills and methods with regular educators. The LTI/SE, then, came into existence during a period that was marked by the development of a fledgling Exceptional Child Program, with BEPD facing new federal financial support patterns, relative isolation of client training programs in terms of common goals, methods, and resources, and a complex situation in the professional field. The opportunities for constructive action, consequently, were virtually unlimited.

4. The nature of the LTI/SE leadership has been an unusually strong factor in shaping the project to carry out its role as a support system. Each loosely structured LTI was placed by the BEPD under a director who was expected to define its mission in concert with an assigned professional partner from the BEPD staff. In the case of the LTI/SE, the Washington-based staff member for the first years was Malcolm Davis; later, Edward Moore became chief of the exceptional child operation. In retrospect, the LTIs probably were more strongly influenced by their respective leaderships than even BEPD had anticipated. Under the leadership of Davis and Reynolds, the LTI/SE has had a preference for fluid and flexible programing, strong relationships with the professional field, close interest in relating to other standing professional institutions and agencies with the potential to influence educational programs for exceptional children, and a posture of simultaneously supporting activities in a number of different domains where such activity has promise of influencing populations beyond that normally served by the LTI/SE. It is in the interest of the LTI/SE to give away such strengths as it may have to professional educators who can use and improve them. The net effect is a less than tidy structure but one that is able to respond openly to the emerging needs of the field.

In sum, the underlying framework, functions, and style of the LTI/SE were tellingly and perhaps irregularly influenced by the fortuitous convergence of (a) the peculiarities of the BEPD and BEH relationship with respect to the education of exceptional children: (b) an undefined purpose, save that to "assist the Bureau and its projects": (c) the massive needs of the professional field; and (d) the nature of USOE and local leadership. A fifth important factor is the nature of support received in turn from federal offices, which is addressed in a following section.

The role of the Advisory Panel needs mention as an influence on LTI/SE programs. The LTI/SE sprang into existence from BEPD fully equipped with an Advisory Panel representing the full range of professional interests in education for handicapped students: 22 persons from college and university training programs (school psychology, special education, regular education, counseling), administrators, related health science fields, professional philanthropic organizations, parent groups, and teachers. The task of the Panel was to assist in defining and focusing on the needs of

(a) the Exceptional Child Program training projects, numbering approximately 100, (b) the professional field of special education, and (c) the relationships of the LTI/SE with federal officers. In effect, the Panel's task was to assist in determining who were the clients for assistance and how best to serve them. In the course of the LTI/SE history, the role of the Advisory Panel has proved extremely helpful in identifying and shaping activities, supplying necessary personnel and resources to conduct a number of these activities, and demonstrating and disseminating the support notion.

Organization and Structure

To help assure flexible and field-owned assistance systems, the USOE initially planned to rotate the several established LTIs among different institutions every two or so years. The rationale was that rotation would increase the emphasis on assistance to the field and forestall the building of institutional investments. Although the LTI/SE has not been moved from the University of Minnesota, it was organized and has functioned continuously as a temporary structure. The temporary aspect of the project was not a negligible factor in determining the LTI/SE staffing pattern. For a variety of reasons, the leadership opted for a small central staff. (a) The tentativeness of the project and the "softness" of funds were not conducive to building a large professional staff. (b) The early assembly of the Advisory Panel of professional colleagues provided available personnel, talent, and resources which could be drawn upon as needed. (c) The belief was strong that part of the LTI/SE mission was to strengthen appropriate existing structures rather than to compete with them. Thus, the LTI/SE was staffed in somewhat of an ad hoc fashion; and it is not inappropriate to characterize the organization as thinly staffed. For five of its first six years, the permanent staff has consisted of the part-time services of two professional special educators, one full-time staff person, one half-time graduate instructor, one full-time secretary, and, for most of that period, a technical editor.

In building the notion of a system of support, the LTI/SE has been able to draw upon the expertise of willing and interested professional colleagues to develop policy and program implementations. These colleagues have served the LTI/SE well. A commitment to a small central staff both enables and encourages a broader and, perhaps, better use of specialists in appropriate roles. The combination can lead to greater flexibility within the structure, less institutionalization of staff roles, fewer (perhaps) bureaucratic constraints and tendencies, better use of available resources, and encouragement to develop more appropriate resources. This broader use of professional colleagues gives the field a stronger sense of "ownership" in the support system and greater opportunity to influence its activities. Furthermore, it encourages the system to concentrate on serving projects and the field rather than on building individual and institutional strength in inappropriate places.

A comparison of LTI staffing patterns is not intended here. Suffice it to say that for this time and this situation, the pattern in which the LTI/SE found itself seemed to work. The minimal staff could be supplemented relatively easily by using the mechanism of short-term contracts for special services. These contracts were made possible through budgetary provisions for "FTEs" (full-time equivalents) and the willingness of the federal offices to support their use. Such contracts permitted development of a broader range of LTI/SE services which could be brought to projects with more precise timing in, for example, such situations as managing/developing conferences; developing materials and products; consultation activities; developing publications; and conducting specialized study groups.

From the standpoint of organizational structure, the Advisory Panel was also an excellent vehicle for providing professional advice, manpower, communication, "legitimization," and dissemination services. Appointed for three-year terms of service, the Panel met twice yearly, on the average, with subsets convening for particular tasks (Product Development, Dissemination, Site Visits, Technical Assistance, etc.). The executive committee of the Panel met with greater frequency and served as a good sounding board for LTI/SE projects and to initiate its own activities, special task forces, and the like.

Federal Supports to the Support System

The federal supports, both in funds and attitude, given to the LTI/SE have been remarkable if not unique; the unusual nature of the support have been a function partly of structure and partly of personality. Structurally, EPDA served all its LTIs well by maintaining the openness in federal directives for organization and in sustaining an awareness of the unusual support activity risked by the BEPD in creating these LTI projects. The BEPD as a whole and the Exceptional Child Branch in particular provided wide latitude in budgetary flexibility and program responsiveness. In addition to the EPDA support, BEH gave support in the form of close interest and cooperation in the activities and role of the LTI/SE (and several other LTIs as well), and it furthered the promise of planful sharing by making available to its own projects the materials/strategies that were being tried and learned through the EPDA projects. Part of this mutual cooperation results from the overlap of missions, responsibilities, and interests; and part results from individual interests. At EPDA, Don vies and Bill Smith at top levels and program directors Mal Davis and Ed Moore have provided unusually responsive support. At BEH, Ed Martin, Bruce Balow, Dick Whelan, Herman Saettler, Ed Sontag, Phil Burke, Tom Behrens, and others consistently have offered cooperation in the planning and implementation of joint projects. It is fair to suggest that the mutual efforts towar building an atmosphere of openness, candor, and trust between and among the LTI/SE and the several federal offices have been, in a comparative sense, unique; the LTI/SE would have been a much different

and probably less responsive system had these offices operated in more traditionally bureaucratic fashions.

Defining a Support Role, or the LTI/SE in Search of a Mission

To this point, the conditions under which the LTI/SE evolved and began to function included an open structure with an ad hoc staff, a pioneering role, a sympathetic funding source, and an unusual opportunity for professional service. One condition, however, was fixed: the 100+ projects with missions to train personnel "to better accommodate handicapped children in regular school settings," which the LTI/SE was committed to assist.

The initial operational year was a flurry of trial and error, not only in defining an appropriate and useful role but also in creating a creditable LTI/SE. In searching for this role, there were some quick alerts on what would and would not be tolerated in the field. For example, an initial meeting of project directors on the topic of prospects for future funding and negotiations with federal offices taugnt the LTI/SE, the "feds," and the projects an early and vitally important lesson: for any creative, intensive, or even useful programmatic association with projects, the LTI/SE needed to separate itself clearly and completely from funding decisions. It was evident that the two kinds of supports--programmatic and money--are antithetical. It was important to the credibility of the LTI/SE that the federal officers learned this lesson well and, thereafter, assisted both the LTI/SE and the projects by maintaining the separation of finances from all LTI/SE activities and protecting the confidentiality of project program uncertainties from financial continue/not continue questions.

Probes for a reasonable LTI/SE role are documented by activities as varied as combining and circulating project abstracts and staff information; conducting needs assessment surveys of projects and Panel; attempting to collect and distribute project narrative and training materials; and attempting to serve as a clearing house, resource center, and resource personnel pool--with all of the shadings possible in each activity. The staff initiated newsletters; polled projects for materials and needs; shared information with the LTIs in other program areas; culled agencies for news; reviewed legislation, policies, and appropriations; established contacts with other standing agencies in special education and related fields; organized task forces on such topics as evaluation and the institutionalization of projects (example: Institutional Impact Inventory); accumulated information on minority involvement in projects, course offerings, and student participation in policy formation; met with executive committees; organized topical subcommittees of the Advisory Panel to develop assessments of field needs; and reached out to search for and incorporate information from other training professions. As activities to support the real needs of the projects, most of these functions, in hindsight, took on a surface level quality of payoff, yet they were extremely important exercises in the creation of a network of personnel and agency communication and in the identification of

organizational and other personnel resources. With respect to most of these undertakings, the single largest problem was one of newness and naivete--in the LTI/SE, the "feds," the Advisory Panel, and the projects. At this early stage, the projects simply had not lived long enough to develop exchangeable information, pinpoint needs in the substance of training (project organization/management/staff development/evaluation/course offerings/practicum placements and supervision/field operations/cooperative planning techniques), develop program descriptions, or generate adequately suitable news/products/materials/strategies that could be identified and made immediately available or useful to others.

One of the most useful of the early activities initiated by the LTI/SE was the major needs assessment survey that contributed to the eventual shaping of the LTI/SE and its purposes for the next years. Out of the threads or recommendations, needs, and suggestions of the project directors emerged a pattern of services to the projects with very constant commonalities; these activities came to be viewed generally under the broad rubric of "technical assistance." The activities included building relationships with other training program areas (e.g., counseling, school psychology, psychology, pupil personnel, administration); providing training for project directors and staffs on both substantive and procedural issues; holding conferences to share materials or discuss substantive field trends; offering consultation services or the delivery of technical/developmental skills to local projects; making site visits/evaluations; developing and publishing a field-related literature; establishing dissemination systems, procedures, and networks with linkages to other agencies; providing central identification of resources, services, and personnel; updating federal program plans and funding patterns; staying abreast of current legislative trends; and trying out a host of suggestions to tailor assistance to local projects in response to individual requests.

The LTI/SE and Technical/Developmental Assistance

Training Conferences

The initial needs assessment survey conducted among the projects served by the LTI/SE confirmed its mission of a commitment to training. The dominant interests of the projects were direct training for directors to increase both their professional and management expertise, and staff development training. The need to develop the role of convener/organizer of training sessions became clear, and it was an appropriate one for the LTI/SE.

The training conferences conducted by the LTI/SE essentially have gone through three phases: conferences in which directors and staff were the audiences for "outside" resources; conferences of an internal sharing nature among the several projects; and conferences turning to broader audiences to disseminate the knowledges/strategies/materials of the projects themselves.

The early meetings of directors and staffs of the EPDA projects had two major purposes: to bring

to project staffs resources outside of their EPDA experiences to assist in problem identification and possible solutions, and to encourage communication and information exchange among projects--"cross pollinization," if you will. Topical areas of common interest and potential problems, as identified by projects for these conferences, included project planning and management; evaluation techniques; minority participation; media utilization; and materials development and distribution strategies. The training conferences in 1969-71 (Minneapolis, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Kansas City) centered on these issues and provided important opportunities for building both formal and informal information networks and identifying areas of common problems. In the course of these conferences, the LTI/SE learned a number of lessons: foremost was an appreciation of the clearly separate and heterogeneous nature of the projects with respect to differences in objectives and approaches, varying expectations for student performances, uneven and difficult staffing patterns, differences in institutional potential for training, differing stages of working relationships with local and national resources, and the like.

As an initial effort, these group training meetings were useful. Over time, however, it became apparent that one kind of assistance is no more suitable to projects on a collective basis than one teaching method is to a collection of students; the individual differences among projects simply required greater attention. At this point, the conferences shifted from reliance on outside specialists to drawing upon project resources to define problems and propose solutions at a variety of developmental levels. The projects began to share their own expertise and soon turned to the dissemination of their expertise among broader audiences--what were known colloquially as "show and tell" conferences. This shift--to drawing from among project resources specialists on particular topics in the training conferences--created a closer attachment between the LTI/SE and its clients. The LTI/SE moved into a position of acting more effectively as a facilitator, while the LTI/SE and projects assumed stronger coordinate status roles. The conference format for sharing materials and emphasizing resources internal to the several EPDA projects showed considerable strengths and was well received by the projects. Overall, the sharing format contributed to building an atmosphere of willingness to share information, materials, failures and successes, as well as discoveries. The net effect had the happy circumstance of supporting the federal purposes of furthering cooperation in planning and implementation activities that contribute to advancing knowledges and practices in the education of handicapped children. The LTI/SE training conferences produced good mileage in building and strengthening a network of special education professional trainers and in providing projects, local districts, states, and regions with an opportunity and format to display and share accomplishments and frustrations on, literally, a national level.

The conferences for project sharing quickly moved to the sharing of expertise on a broader scale: to other university and school-based training programs beyond EPDA, state level educators,

administrators, teachers, and other federal training programs. The receptivity of the audiences to these dissemination sessions came in large measure from the pressing needs in the field for tools and tested techniques, and through the discovery that the EPDA projects had such knowledges and strategies to communicate. The urge to share meshed with the urge to know; they combined to support broad dissemination conferences. The role of facilitator assumed by the LTI/SE was now entirely appropriate. Key ingredients for enhancing the usefulness of the dissemination conferences included the following:

1. Scheduling conferences for critical populations in critical locations. Massachusetts and Pennsylvania: In Massachusetts, the passage of Chapter 766; in Pennsylvania, the federal court consent decree. Miami: the combination of on-line special education directors from the largest cities of the nation (represented in the Council of Great Cities Schools), representatives of training institutions preparing personnel for those cities, and state directors of special education in those states. Albuquerque: the same combination of representatives from the Southwest. Chicago: the full range of teacher trainers, represented by the BEH and BEPD-supported programs, and the membership of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children.

2. Sponsoring conferences with the following clear and simple objectives:

...Share materials, strategies, and approaches for training personnel to work with handicapped children.

...Encourage the highest possible degree of cooperative planning for training among the state agencies, institutions for higher education, and local school districts.

...Prevent "surprises" to each of the above agencies by encouraging communication and planning to deal with programing needs, training approaches, available local forces and trends in special education.

...Increase an awareness of the emergence of training systems and models and of the availability of national and local resources to assist in the adaption/installation of training programs in local situations; extending the awareness of projects to the resources of federal and non-federal programs with similar or overlapping objectives, as represented by the inclusion in dissemination conferences of programs such as Trend, Teacher Corps, Urban/Rural, and Early Childhood/Pupil Personnel.

The dissemination conferences began in 1972 and continued through 1974. They provided the following observations and support system reinforcements:

...Illustration of the collective progress, over time, of the training programs in developing skills and techniques to better prepare teachers;

...Documentation of the general willingness and near-eagerness of federally supported programs to share in relatively non-self-serving ways the knowledge acquired.

...Documentation of the willingness of administrators, teacher trainers, state educational

personnel, and federal personnel to work in a cohesive fashion to plan for meeting common problems and seeking common solutions.

...Illustration of the relatively low investment demanded of a facilitator or support system, such as the LTI/SE, to produce respectable and even admirable payoff for shar g materials and knowledges and to help federal offices attain their anticipated ripple effect from federal investments.

...Illustration, in summary, of the assumption that a support system can be broadly useful as initiator, organizer, and responder to the needs and interests of consumers, and that it can do so in a fashion that does not threaten either clients or consumers.

Consultation, Site Visits and Project Advocates

The term "technical assistance" frequently tends to be used as a descriptor of the general kinds of supports offered through agencies such as the LTI/SE. A more focused application of assistance, in terms of the capacity to deliver particularized skills and knowledge to identified target audiences, is, perhaps, more appropriately technical; such services have been offered through the LTI/SE throughout its existence under a range of consultation arrangements. Recipients of various kinds of consultation range from the several projects/clients served by the LTI/SE, to the general field, and to the respective federal offices who are concerned with education for exceptional children.

A number of consultation arrangements for carrying out technical services have been used by the LTI/SE; for example: facilitating short (one- or two-day) visits by one or more outside skilled specialists to work with appropriate project staffs on identified problems of project management or professional substance; facilitating or directly organizing short-term workshops or institutes around specified needs for specified populations; facilitating or directly organizing exchanges of visits by project staffs; organizing regional clusterings of project staffs, staff subsets, or combinations of projects, IHE representatives, and state agency or other educational personnel; delegating or contracting with third parties to organize special consultation arrangements; and serving as a kind of resource center to identify or assist in identifying appropriate resources to aid in consultation services in requested instances.

In addition to these more usual brands of technical assistance, that is, serving as a broker in the identification of possible resources for specific consultation requests and/or offering or negotiating financial assistance for procuring such technical services, the LTI/SE has fostered two other more unusual forms of consultation assistance which proved to be significant: (a) site visits, and (b) project advocates, which emerged out of the site visit process.

Site Visits. Site visits of various shades and configurations long have been employed by agencies as a program evaluation technique, with the evaluations frequently leading to decisions of financial support. Significantly, the LTI/SE attempted to turn its evaluations into friendly, open,

supportive, and constructive consultation forums that were clearly apart from money decisions. Financial support decisions were more appropriately left to the federal program offices and their procedures.

The entire site-visit procedure designed by the LTI/SE was to forge a cooperative team of professional experts from the field, the project staffs, and the federal offices with the common objective of assisting a project to reach its stated goals and purposes to the maximum capacity of its resources. The primary beneficiaries of these "friendly visits" were the various project staff; the secondary beneficiaries were the federal offices supporting these projects, insofar as the visits assisted in general program assessment and in providing professional assistance to these clients. With some anxieties, but to its credit, the federal offices of the Exceptional Child Branch found it possible and desirable to accept assistance from field professionals in what might be construed as its own territory; the result was a constructive, positive partnership working to improve each of the training projects.

Procedures for site visits were carefully drawn and checked with the project/clients and were well known in advance in relation to purposes, objectives, areas of interest to visitors, and procedures for clear and open feedback to the projects. Contact with the separate projects enabled the better identification of emerging and promising training techniques which were immediately available for application in the field. The site visits seemed to offer benefits to all partners: the projects received outside consultation on matters of process and substance as they pertained to their individual situations; the federal offices received professional assessments on program content, field trends, general administrative strengths, and was helped in its responsibilities of monitoring federal investments; the LTI/SE was able to gain more accurate knowledge of the general state of the training art within the several projects, to identify promising resources of personnel and materials, and to acquire better information for planning its own assistance program. The unique aspect of this site-visit/consultation process was the creation of a partnership of the LTI/SE, the projects, and federal offices to promote the production of best possible programs for training educational personnel. Careful attention was given by all parties to establishing credibility of the process, open communication, and trust throughout the events related to the visit.

The first year of the site-visit process, visits were made to each of the projects; the second, to new and terminating programs, and to others on request; the third, on a recommendation or request basis. The purposes of the visits were straightforward and well shared:

...To evaluate program implementation against program and federal objectives.

...To identify to the project staff the strengths and weaknesses of its program.

...To assist staff in seeking appropriate means and resources to better fulfill project potential.

...To identify for the field strengths and materials in the projects that could be shared or developed for broader use.

An interesting aside, which, perhaps, is a testimonial to the process, is that the LTI/SE site-visit format and materials have been adapted to and revised for a number of additional settings.

Project Advocates. Following the experience with the site visit and its formal format, complete with advance organizers, manuals, report forms, and summaries of reports to all contributing parties, a more informal system for consultation through project advocates was initiated. Details of the project advocate system are given in this report by Deno. The LTI/SE project advocate system was comprised of the services of six outside professional educators, each of them serving between 6 and 10 projects. Whereas the roles of the advocates were negotiated with the relevant projects, the general roles tended to be those of professional advisors or counselors to the projects. Advocates served the projects by an almost priviledged communication with the project staffs; their services were bounded by the general constraints of the projects and frequently took the form of tapping both outside or inside project resources, serving as sounding boards for directors and staff ideas pertaining to project implementation and improvement. The advocates were not asked to make formal reports to the LTI/SE or to federal program personnel, but were encouraged to draw on the resources of the LTI/SE as they were appropriate for individual projects. The payoff to the projects came in providing a knowledgeable professional educator willing to put his/her services at the disposal of the project and to work together with the staff toward the single goal of reaching training potential. The payoff to the LTI/SE appeared in the development of a cadre of well-informed professionals to advise the LTI/SE generally on needed services, field trends, emerging needs, and development of programs and personnel available for service to the broader educational community. With the eventual expiration of the EPDA program and this brand of LTI, one of the most satisfying and useful of the proven support ideas, in all likelihood, will be the arrangement known as the project advocate, which may well appear in adapted forms in other locations.

Publications

In a fashion somewhat similar to that experienced in technical assistance and consultation events, the role of the LTI/SE in the realm of publications is equally evolutionary. In the beginning stage of the LTI/SE, the prospect of an active publication role could not have been anticipated. The function as initiator and implementor was literally demanded as the LTI/SE tested its way to discovery of field needs and explored the capacities of support system opportunities. In retrospect, it seems perfectly consistent with the support system notion to consider development/publication activities to be legitimate, reasonable, and necessary to assist the development and growth of the professional field.

The publications role now has achieved a respectable budget in the LTI/SE framework and is an

increasing part of its activities. The initial volume, Exceptional Children in Regular Classrooms, Maynard C. Reynolds and Malcolm D. Davis (Eds.), came into existence as a direct outgrowth of the LTI/SE commitment to share emerging training materials and strategies as they were developed in the EPDA projects and to extend or disseminate these promising practices. In the course of the project advocates' work, site visits, and training conferences, a number of locations were identified where handicapped or exceptional children successfully were being served in regular school programs; the descriptions of these programs in print promised to be useful to a wide range of administrators, teachers, teacher trainers, and educational planners. The development of the publication was a logical undertaking for the LTI/SE, given its commitment to dissemination, its relationship with the projects, and its financial flexibility.

Explorations into publications have presented the LTI/SE with the challenge and opportunity to develop a practical kind of expertise in materials development, and have necessitated the acquisition of skills such as contracting for services of authors, cautions for clearances with subjects, explorations of commercial publishing houses and others on development techniques and price structures, policies for royalty and copyright procedures, processes relating to the establishment of parameters of volume development, issues of editorial and duplication procedures, and, of course, the inevitable distribution and dissemination concerns.

Now firmly launched into publications, the LTI/SE purposes are again simple:

...To encourage an awareness of successful training methods, practices, procedures and materials developed in EPDA projects and elsewhere;

...To make available to the special education field and educational community practices and materials from related disciplines.

Concomitantly, the LTI/SE policies governing publications also are simple:

...Manuscripts are produced with no royalties to authors, with their consent.

...Volumes are disseminated at as low cost as possible to consumers, with interest in distribution on as wide a scale as possible.

In point of fact, over the course of developing books there have been no royalties to authors, and but two instances of royalties to organizations (The Foundation for Exceptional Children and the United Negro College Fund).

Two of the first sets of LTI/SE published materials focused on training practices and instructional techniques, representing an effort to capture and disseminate EPDA-initiated work. These volumes, Exceptional Children in Regular Classes (Reynolds & Davis, Eds.) and Instructional Alternatives for Exceptional Children (E.N. Deno, Ed.), have had very favorable reception in the field and are among the most informative and useful assists to teacher trainers and administrators concerned with programing for handicapped children in regular school programs.

Another early effort in the domain of publications was the production of a more theoretical volume, the report of the conference on Psychology and the Process of Schooling in the Next Decade: Alternative Conceptions (M.C. Reynolds, Ed.). This conference brought together a number of distinguished educators and psychologists on the question of the application of psychology to educational practices. This conference was the first of a series of cross-disciplinary cooperative undertakings which have produced conference reports.

The fourth publication supported through the Leadership Training Institute/Special Education was again in the area of teacher training and also was of a cooperative interinstitutional nature. The volume, Instructional Development for Training Teachers of Exceptional Children: A Sourcebook (S. Thiagarajan, D. Semmel, & M. Semmel, Eds.) was the product of an agreement by the authors at Indiana University and a dissemination agreement among the authors, the LTI/SE, The Council for Exceptional Children, and the Teacher Education Division, Council for Exceptional Children.

More recently, the publication pattern has been clarified and promulgated as an integral part of LTI/SE activities. The pattern reflects the two primary thrusts of the LTI/SE: (a) contributing to the building of a literature for both special and regular educators, drawing from the domains of a number of related disciplines, and (b) contributing to the documented skills and strategies of practices for teachers, administrators, and support services to improve educational opportunities for exceptional children in regular class settings.

Efforts in building a literature for special educators and related fields are reflected in the following publications:

Domain Referenced Testing in Special Education (W. Hively & M.C. Reynolds, Eds.), 1975.

Psychological Consultation: Helping Teachers Meet Special Needs (C.A. Parker, Ed.), 1975.

Observation of Pupils and Teachers in Mainstream and Special Education Settings: Alternative Strategies (R.A. Weinberg & F.H. Wood, Eds.), 1975.

Early Development and Education of Children with Special Needs (H.H. Spicker, N.J. Anastasiow, & W.L. Hodges, Eds.), 1976.

Materials oriented to special and regular education teacher trainers include the following:

Mainstreaming: Educable Mentally Retarded Children in Regular Classes (J.W. Birch), 1974.

Hearing Impaired Children in Mainstream Settings (J.W. Birch), 1976.

Mainstreaming: Visually Impaired Children in Regular Classes (G. Martin & others), 1976.

Mainstreaming: Learning Disabled, Emotionally Disturbed, and Socially Maladjusted Children in Regular Classes (E.N. Deno), 1976.

Two additional volumes of interest to perhaps a somewhat smaller audience are

Special Education and School System Decentralization (M.C. Reynolds, Ed.), 1975.

National Technical Assistance Systems in Special Education: Report of the Conference in Washington, D. C. (M.C. Reynolds, Ed.), 1976.

Plans for the future include the addition of three volumes to the above publications on the topics of mainstreaming for the minority child, problems in speech and hearing, and a general foundational volume on the mainstreaming trend.

The charge to disseminate current practices and materials has been the prod for the initiation of the publications program. For LTI/SE purposes, the most productive mechanism for manuscript development has been to initiate and organize small workshops on specialized topics, invite potential contributing authors to prepare manuscripts for the workshop, and rework and edit the resultant papers for publication. In meeting the commitment to both training and dissemination, the LTI/SE, in turn, has used these publications as background materials for broader conferences of a training nature; in this context, both missions have been served. Whereas the LTI/SE has never intended to serve as a distribution center, it has been frustrated with the many problems related to the national distribution of materials. A very helpful assist to reaching national distribution has come from The Council for Exceptional Children which has been willing to include selected LTI/SE publications in its dissemination system. This cooperation has meant that many problems of announcement, advertising, and general management have been taken over by CEC.

Throughout all of these publication efforts, the target audience has remained constant: special educators, regular educators, administrators, teacher trainers, and supporting professionals. In each publication, the development process also has been similar: topics have been generally identified through the LTI/SE, the central office has made contacts for manuscript development, conducted workshops, and carried out the responsibilities for editing and duplication processes. It should be noted that the process includes a constant exchange between LTI/SE and authors to the end that the final publication reflects the views of the authors and not a predisposed position of the LTI/SE.

Materials Development

Closely related to publications, of course, is materials development. The LTI/SE role again is of an evolutionary nature and not an initial objective around which the LTI organized; at this stage, it clearly is appropriate to our support system activity. The initial view of the LTI/SE was that materials development more logically belongs in the domain of the projects themselves and other agencies; increasingly, the critical assists a support system can provide have become apparent and more urgently required: completed, exportable, and quality training materials simply do not exist in abundance; good, tested materials languish in hidden corners needing but few finishing touches to enable broader use; and solid instructional materials are neglected in achieving final development

stages when developers move to other professional roles and responsibilities.

The LTI/SE role with respect to the development of materials has two casts: initiating development and providing the bridge to production; there would be a third, if the LTI had so elected--dissemination, distribution, and advertising, and even "recommending." The role of initiator is helpful largely in defining and producing materials in critical areas that cut across specialties in the field--topics of urgent import extending beyond local, regional, or state interests and lying outside the ordinary scope of other programs. One of the best examples of such cut-across areas is the current legislative and court actions in special education, and the need to document trends in the field and to provide an update on consequent changes in training programs. The film, "Those Other Kids," was developed through contract between the LTI/SE and CEC as a response to this need; payoff on the investment to produce the film has been substantial in terms of general information services provided to a broad, national audience.

The "bridging" role may be seen by client projects and others as more consistent with the support system; the role is characterized simply as an effort to assist in making available a number of already developed, tested, and usable instructional materials to a broader population. The need for this support function comes int. play at the stage at which local projects, having developed materials or training systems which are useful to their clients, have neither sufficient interest, reason, nor time to take the necessary steps to "finish" the materials so they can be placed into a broader dissemination/consumer network. Duties in the "bridging" role would include identifying or responding to the field identification of promising training materials that would have use beyond their local situations, validating or assuring that these materials are reviewed or juried by professionals and warrant dissemination, assuming tasks of readying materials for production, and searching for appropriate distribution systems. All these tasks would be carried out in cooperation with the developer(s) of the materials. Although this bridging role is played by other permanent agencies at a more fully developed process (e.g., CEC's Product Development), it is apparent that there still is need for this role at a somewhat more informal or less sophisticated level. As the EPDA projects developed materials and as these materials surfaced at training conferences and through the site visits, requests to the LTI/SE for assistance in making selected materials more widely available increased. In this setting, the LTI/SE has been able to make a useful contribution through a willingness to take on the review/editing, duplicating, and extra budget demands necessary to bring materials to the point where they may be shared on an informal, low-cost, thin market level. Examples of such activities include the LTI/SE work with developers of the Principals' Training Program and the Teachers' Training Program (Education Service Center, Austin, Texas), films and manuals on "Special Education Placement" (University of Connecticut), and a variety of instructional materials ranging from bibliographies to course outlines to evaluation instruments.

Dissemination

As ought to be clear from the previous pages, the role of dissemination has come to assume a position of highest priority for the LTI/SE. One of the major reasons for its continued existence has been to encourage and promote the sharing of ideas and training materials--in fact, to promote and assist the sharing of all aspects of skills and delivery services for the improvement of education for handicapped children--in the broadest sense and to the widest population. An entirely appropriate and even justifying mission for the LTI/SE has come to be an effort to encourage the most open communication among and between agencies at all levels serving handicapped children: federal office to federal office; federal offices to training projects; training projects to other training programs, and training institutions to state agencies, districts, local schools, and various supporting agencies.

At the LTI/SE, the commitment to dissemination is governed by three principles:

...To encourage the multiplier effect proclaimed through supporting federal offices, that is, to capitalize on EPDA funds for the attainment of broad impact of federal monies.

...To work through standing professional agencies when possible, thereby strengthening their own functions and dissemination capacities.

...To insure, when possible, the availability of training materials at as low cost as possible.

Dissemination has been carried through most of the LTI/SE activities and, obviously, is reflected in the training conferences, consultation activities, publications, development of materials, and relations to the general field.

The practical problems of distribution of materials, products, and resources has presented a continuing challenge and problem, as it has to most other support systems. Problems continue to reside in the technical and procedural aspects of the identification and evaluation of training materials, production, placements in appropriate distribution systems, and communication of appropriate usage and training contexts. However, the LTI/SE has made a beginning; LTI/SE experiences in the entire process of dissemination strategies, problems, and techniques offer clear evidence that there is a major need for increased and continuing attention to the improvement of information delivery. Similarly, these experiences indicate it is possible to make good progress in working out better systems for developing and sharing materials with consumers, with accompanying sufficient rewards to the developers.

Linkages

The critical importance, needs, and benefits of linkages of support systems with a range of both professional and nonprofessional agencies and institutions are apparent. It also is apparent that linkages are forged slowly and not always easily. A hard look at the LTI/SE record suggests that

such linkages are, in fact, being made with good progress over what is a relatively short time. For the LTI/SE, these linkages include the development of working relationships not only with the directly supporting federal agency (EPDA), but also with related federal bureaus (BEH and others); organizations of special education state directors (N.A.S.D.S.E.), city directors of special education (Council of Great Cities Schools), university educational administrators (University Council for Educational Administration); the professional organization of special educators (The Council for Exceptional Children) and its accompanying division for teacher trainers (Teacher Education Division, CEC); and an extended variety of information networks and training agencies for educational personnel. To the numbers of budding formal linkages there have been added increasingly the strengthening of relationships with several informal networks. The possibilities for building constructive relationships that will have impact on the education of children are vast. However, it is clear that maximum field impact will occur when the several bureaus and agencies directed to the improvement of education for handicapped children join together to plan and develop policies and procedures for the systematic improvement of services to the institutions and agencies training educational personnel.

Special Projects

The flexibility of the LTI/SE has permitted and even encouraged the initiation and development of a wealth of special activities that fall somewhere beyond the usual threads of its more "routine" functions. This paper may not be the place to detail these involvements, but a general reference to them adds substance to the full range and possibilities in documenting support activities. Some of these special projects include the following:

...Council for the Great Cities Schools: Task Force on Special Education. Since 1970 the LTI/SE has offered programmatic and financial support to meetings of the special education representatives of the Council. The membership includes those administrators from the nation's largest school districts with on-line responsibility for special education programs. The task force has met on the average of twice annually to study topics of particular interest and import to the large school systems, and to search for solutions to problems that are common to the cities. The urgency for stronger associations and action in the domain of urban education has prompted this group to seek to form a special support system to be directly concerned with assistance to the large cities.

...The LTI/SE has undertaken a special effort to direct technical assistance supports to one of the nation's large districts currently facing unusually difficult constraints; the purpose is to assist its central staff to reorganize for the improvement of service delivery to handicapped children. A related program in the

district has been to develop pilot training programs, involving local schools and teacher-training institutions, to train regular class teachers to provide appropriate educational opportunities to children with special learning needs in their regular classrooms.

...The LTI/SE has been able to provide financial support for a number of special study groups. The following are examples:

* Supports to facilitate study of evaluation instruments developed and utilized in early EPDA projects.
* Special supports to make available to the EPDA projects the skills of the Behavior Management Institute.
* Supports to the Teacher Education Division, CEC, to assist in product development negotiations and policies formation.
* Supports to a special study group to explore separate approaches to school districts' organization of special services.
* Special supports to the development of the system for behavior skills laboratory materials.
* Special supports to facilitate the organization of educators concerned with education for the profoundly handicapped.

...The LTI/SE has undertaken special experimental programs with related federal agencies, such as the several joint dissemination conferences conducted with the assistance of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped; special programing efforts with the State Directors of Special Education and with federally supported programs bearing titles such as TREND, Urban/Rural, Teacher Corps, Early Childhood, and Pupil Personnel Services.

...Other special projects have included financial assistance or support services for the development of monographs, papers, training materials, and so forth.

...The LTI/SE has been able to provide consultation to a wide range of federal offices on the development and implementation of teacher-training policies as they may relate to improved education for handicapped children.

Summary

The evolution of the LTI/SE from its experimental project beginnings into a special brand of national support system standing in a time period, of this report, of under six years, is a kind of

documentation of the strong needs and possibilities extant for service and supports to assist educational programs serving handicapped or exceptional children: the LTI/SE experience credits the creative risk undertaken by USOE in an effort to maximize federal investments in training regular educational personnel to work with handicapped children in regular class settings.

The evolvement of this particular support agency has been rapid--through the sensitive and tentative steps to create a workable framework; establish working relationships with federal offices, project/clients and the field; define appropriate missions and tasks; develop procedures and policies for organizational functions; and anticipate needs and means of best serving the interests of handicapped children and improved educational systems. There are any number of observations that could be made on the manner and style in which the LTI/SE developed or chose not to develop, but the outlined topics provide information in a general way on the nature and focus of this particular system.

At the moment, the LTI/SE continues to grow and function in a somewhat experimental fashion, building on the discovered cornerstones; the LTI/SE is not intended to remain in operation in perpetuity. Given its experiences to date, however, there are several evident observations in relation to support systems:

...The notion of one or several support systems to serve programs in education is both realistic and appropriate.

...There are any number of constructive leadership roles and technical responsibilities critical to the improvement of the field that lie somewhat beyond usual domains of standing programs or agencies; support systems can be useful to encourage standing agencies to assume these tasks, or can itself assume nonrecurring responsibilities.

...A support system can provide to the field and related disciplines leadership and technical resources not duplicated in other agencies.

...It is possible to create a system that exists to serve a set of projects for the field and does not exist to build individual or institutional investments.

...It is possible to build imaginative, constructive working relationships across professional roles and disciplines; there exist a wealth of possibilities for useful action to extend the limits and quality of known educational practices.

...There is a special urgency to foster and build consistent means for effectively tapping available leadership, personnel, materials, and financial resources to improve the educational opportunities and quality of instruction for children with special learning needs and, indeed, for all children.

The Need for a Problem-Solving Capability in Special Education

James C. Chalfant
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Federal training grants have stimulated the preparation of personnel. Leadership training institutes have stimulated the development of demonstration programs, helped the field to conceptualize, and gathered data for short-term studies. Federal monies have occasionally contributed to service needs. Nevertheless, special education lacks a mechanism for assisting local school districts, state offices of education, and institutions of higher education to resolve questions and issues relating to service, training, and research. The field does not have a system or mechanism for problem solving and technical assistance. The field of special education lacks problem-solving capability.

Grass Root Problems

What are the problems at the grass roots level of local school districts? I have included a list of questions which are asked of me most frequently by special education personnel in local school districts.

Screening, Referral, Identification

1. What procedures are used for screening and identification?
2. How do special education personnel in the local school districts relate to the identification process?
   a. Psychologists
   b. Speech correctionists
   c. School nurses
   d. Diagnostic-teachers
   e. Social workers
   f. Remedial reading teachers
   g. Physical education personnel
3. To what extent can classroom teachers become involved in the identification process? What informal techniques are available for classroom use in the identification of children with learning disabilities?

4. How can preschool children be identified and referred?
5. In the identification process, when should central staff observe a child in the classroom? Are there other ways to obtain this information?

Assessment

1. What basic information should be included in a referral diagnostic service?
2. What are the procedures for scheduling individual diagnostic examinations?
   a. Who is responsible for coordinating diagnostic services?
   b. When is the diagnostic service provided?
   c. When should staff from a diagnostic center go to the local district to conduct diagnosis, and when should children be brought to the Center?
3. How do different staff members contribute to the diagnostic process? Do some of their roles overlap? If so, how can they be coordinated for maximum efficiency?
   a. Psychologist
   b. Diagnostic-teacher
   c. Social workers, etc.
4. In diagnosis, how does one deal with a child who has a learning disability which is accompanied by an emotional disorder?
5. Who is involved in the staffing and what is his major contribution?
   a. Who is in charge of the staffing?
   b. What kinds of decisions are made?
   c. What procedures should be employed in a typical staffing?
   d. How might conflicting evaluations be handled?
6. How many children can be assessed in one year? Child-staff ratio?

Special Instruction

1. When should a child be taught individually, in a small group, or in a special class?
2. How long can a teacher profitably work with a child in a single session?
3. How many days a week should a child be seen?
4. When is a child taught in the center and when are remedial services provided by his local district?
5. When do special education personnel travel to and teach in local school districts?
6. The child with learning problems is confronted with two problems:
   He must receive academic instruction and, at the same time, attempt to overcome specific deficits in the learning processes through remedial training. How can his school program be coordinated to permit achievement in both areas?

7. Considerable attention has been given to the merits of various kinds of training and their implications for learning.
   a. What are the assumptions relating to this training? Are they supported by empirical data?
   b. What percentage of children with learning problems require this training?
   c. What kinds of training procedures are used most widely? When should these methods be applied?
8. Do emotional problems diminish with improvement in a specific learning problem, despite a poor home situation? Is counseling important?
9. What kinds of learning problems should be served by the program?

Inservice Training

1. How do we determine what kinds of inservice training are needed?
2. What kinds of inservice vehicles would be most helpful? Who should lead these workshops?
3. What recommendations can be made with respect to visiting other programs? Who should make these visits?
4. What educational materials are available in the area of learning disabilities? What are some criteria for selection?
5. How can an instructional materials center be developed for the center and what kinds of equipment and instructional materials should it contain?

Institutions of Higher Education

Colleges and universities contribute to special education by preparing personnel to carry on research and publishing, and to serve as consultants to service agencies. Many problems and issues arise in attempting to carry out these functions. Technical assistance through a support system would help improve the focus and quality of work done in our institutions of higher learning.

State Offices of Education

State office personnel are involved in legislation, standards, regulations, guidelines, certification, financial matters, inservice, and the like. There is frequent need for supportive service and technical assistance by state education agencies.

Road Blocks To Technical Assistance

Four major problems relate to the development of a problem-solving capability.

1. The staffs of local school districts are totally engaged in trying to deliver programs to children.

2. State office of education personnel are usually involved with planning budget, administering budget, conducting head counts to insure that the budget is being spent properly, and dealing with

various state crises. There are exceptions, but most state office personnel simply lack the time to be effective in helping local districts with in-depth program questions.

3. Most university programs in special education are staffed by professors who are usually paid for training students. Most professors do research and publishing on their own time. An occasional grant may release some time. Service to school districts is low priority in academia and rarely goes beyond a one- or two-day workshop or speech.

4. It simply is not possible for a leadership training institute housed in a single geographic location to provide the massive amount of problem solving and assistance that is needed at many levels across the United States.

The Concept: Twelve National Technical Assistance Groups

It is suggested that a support system for special education be established by creating 12 national technical assistance groups. The functions of these groups would be as follows:

1. To establish a national problem-solving network that would share information and collaborate with other field study groups and various service agencies.

2. To mobilize and direct resources to provide technical assistance and to direct them toward field problems.

3. To solve problems by creating consortium arrangements among local, state, and university facilities and conducting field studies and research activities.

4. To assist school districts to implement existing methods.

5. To provide leadership and direction in training personnel.

Problems in the field would be brought back to universities, studied, researched, field tested, and evaluated. These activities enhance training and research. The focal point of technical assistance, research, and training would be the ongoing problems that confront professionals in the field. The 12 groups could provide the means to identify, focus on, and resolve grass root problems in the field.

If this plan were to be adopted, a leadership training institute could assume the role of coordination and dissemination. The field study groups should not become bogged down in dissemination; their mission is problem solving.

A technical assistance network could be developed in many ways. Rather than technical assistance centers to provide support for geographic areas, I would recommend specialized technical assistance groups. For example, one group might emphasize delivering services to sparsely populated areas and another might stress decategorized classes, high-school programs, diagnostic services, or the like.

A group specializing in a given problem area would have the responsibility for (a) collating all that is known about the area; (b) identifying people and agencies across the country who are

knowledgeable about the problem; (c) setting up an information and support network; (d) providing leadership and direction in that problem area; (3) informing other technical assistance groups; (f) bringing resources, wherever they may be, to bear on a problem; and (g) carrying out research and development projects. Figure 1 illustrates alternatives for action.

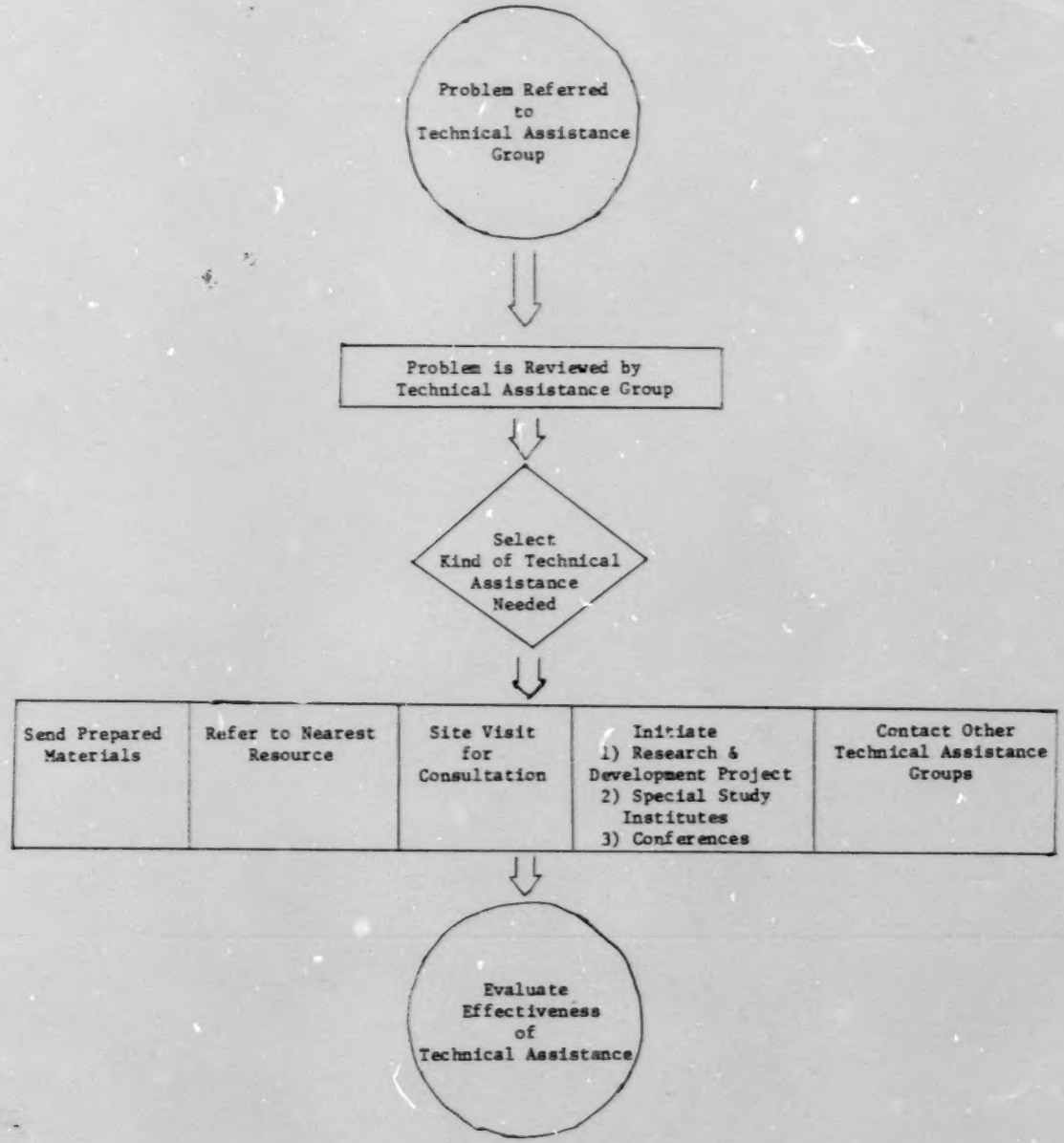
Problem Referred to Technical Assistance Group
Problem is Reviewed by Technical Assistance Group
Select Kind of Technical Assistance Needed
Send Prepared Materials
Refer to Nearest Resource
Site Visit for Consultation
Initiate 1) Research & Development Project 2) Special Study Institutes 3) Conferences
Contact Other Technical Assistance Groups
Evaluate Effectiveness of Technical Assistance

Figure 1. Alternatives for technical assistance.

If the technical assistance group is housed in a university, the core staff might consist of

a secretary and three or four staff members who teach 50 percent appointments with the group. The budget for such a group might be $250,000 to $300,000. Much of the expense would be assumed by local districts, state offices of education, and universities who request technical assistance, or would be funded through grants.

This model would create 12 problem-solving centers across the United States. By drawing schools, universities, and state offices of education together into consortium arrangements, service, research, and training could be strengthened in special education.

Problem Solving in Boston: A Preliminary Report

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In this report of the involvement of the Leadership Training Institute/Special Education (LTI/SE) with the Boston Public Schools in 1973-74, an introductory section giving some of the context of the work is followed by sections describing the activities developed by several prime consultants through a year of collaboration, the theories of the technical assistance approach and their application to the Boston situation, and a short summary.

I. The Context

The focus on Boston emerged, in part, out of the LTI/SE's general interests and, in part, out of activities initiated by the LTI/SE with the Council of Great Cities, a national organization of the superintendents and board of education members of the nation's 24 largest school districts. As the result of its work with various innovative training projects in different parts of the nation and in order to extend the usefulness of those projects to other school districts or educational agencies, the LTI/SE began a shift in attention to processes of dissemination. Also, when USOE officials and LTI advisers indicated that priority might be given to the special education programs of our largest cities, the LTI moved accordingly to support the organization of special education program administrators in the Council of Great Cities. In cooperation with this group, various training sessions were initiated and attempts were made to identify the kinds of problems in the cities' special education programs that might require outside technical assistance. It was in the context of these explorations that Boston was selected for a pilot study in more intensive technical

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assistance activities.

The LTI relationships with the Great Cities' special education administrators were developed during 1971-72, the two years encompassing great changes in special education. Nationally, a veritable explosion of litigation on the rights of handicapped persons has transformed what was considered the proverbial right to education to a legal right. The due process provisions for the handicapped, central to the equitable placement of youngsters with special needs, had been impressively articulated in the Pennsylvania Consent Agreement.[5]

The thrust of the harlequin pattern of litigation was that special students shall be a part of not apart from normative educational arrangements and that changes in educational placement shall not be determined arbitrarily or capriciously but with full attention to the due process provision of the Fourteenth Amendment. In different parts of the country, actions by citizens' groups and new, different legislative enactments carried implications of nationwide impact. Furthermore, the concepts of special education itself were undergoing revisions that implied a different role for special education in the schools. Special educators become involved in the turmoil of the changes as participants or theoreticians and they began to develop skills and procedures that would be needed for the implementation of anticipated mandates to change established systems of delivering services to handicapped children.

This explosion of judicial, legislative, and citizen actions reverberated in Massachusetts. As a result, the legislative body of the Commonwealth, in 1972, enacted Chapter 766, a law with an enormous potential impact on the educational and life arrangements of handicapped persons in the state and, particularly, in Boston, the state's only very large city. However, there was a substantial gap between potentiality and reality, especially in Boston, because of scarce resources for the development of new programs.

Litigation was also very much a part of the educational scene in Massachusetts although it was slightly different from the litigation elsewhere. The Boston schools had been under the systematic perusal of citizens as they studied children out of school, and there were difficulties concerning aspects of the recently implemented Mental Retardation Regulations (1972) and litigation related to the testing of children. The lack of an acceptable racial desegregation plan had deprived Boston's schools of federal funds and was a continuing source of difficulty for the city's schools. At the same time, the Boston schools were facing all the problems endemic to most urban school systems: declining enrollments, municipal overburden, union difficulties, a highly charged political school environment, bureaucratic inertia, and a shortage of resources.[6]

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[5]Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children, Nancy Beth Bowman et al., v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1972.

[6]Peter Schrag's The Village School Downtown, now somewhat out of date, suggests some of the ambience of the Boston School System.

Chapter 766 was enacted to "remedy past inadequacies and inequities by defining the needs of children requiring special education in a broad and flexible manner." The intent of the law was to mandate a transition from the categorization of youngsters to the focusing on typologies of need related to appropriate interventions. It also specified the inclusion of special-needs children into regular programs as much as possible and the concomitant involvement of parents in all aspects of the educational process. The rights of all children to an appropriate and adequate education and the guarantee of the right of appeal for any evaluation and placement decision were integral parts of the legislation. Other sections pertained to revised funding patterns and the possibilities of regional organization for service delivery; although they raised many difficulties for the schools they are not germane to this discussion and have been omitted.

The meaning of Chapter 766 was quite clear: Not only was the programmatic aspect of education to be changed substantially but, also, the administrative structure supporting those programs was to be "re-conceptualized" and reorganized. In Boston, for example, the Department of Special Services had been organized on a categorical basis, that is, there was one administrator for the perceptually handicapped, one for speech and hearing, another for the emotionally disturbed, and so on. Chapter 766 required the decategorization of students which meant that the decategorization of administrators was a logical accommodative step.

Representatives of the Commonwealth Department of Special Education and of various institutions of higher education requested and joined with the LTI/SE to organize a conference for them and members of public school systems in Massachusetts and, especially, Boston. This conference focused on alternative training models in special education that were congruent with the provisions of Chapter 766. Most of the models then in view had been developed under EPDA sponsorship or as special projects under BEH funding.

Aside from the desirability or undesirability of the models presented and discussed, several other factors became clear. (a) There was a great deal of ambiguity about the capacity of educational organizations in Massachusetts to comply with the law by the specified date--fall of 1974. (b) It appeared that the colleges and universities in the state communicated with each other infrequently and had few direct and productive relations with the Boston school system, and that those relations that did occur were on an irregular basis.

The Special Education Division of the Commonwealth Department of Education consisted of only a small staff and seemed to be largely consumed in developing, measuring, and enforcing compliance with regulations. It fell short of the capacity to help school systems develop strategies and programs for compliance with what was becoming the increasingly famous and ominous Chapter 766.

Most important, Boston was clearly the bellwether for Chapter 766. If Boston could begin to deal with the facts and implications of the law, then it seemed likely that other school systems

in the state would follow. In an important sense the test was even larger: If Boston could implement "766," it would, perhaps, have national ramifications.

In conjunction with the Associate Superintendent in charge of Special Services, a four-phase plan was developed. The first phase emphasized orientation; general and special administrators from Boston visited model programs in other cities and held discussions with their school system representatives. The purpose, to create awareness of specific programs that presented working alternatives for the Boston schools, also recognized the critical importance of developing shared insights and commitments among the top leadership in the system. Dr. Richard A. Johnson, who later emerged as one of the two prime consultants on the Technical Assistance Team and a principal of one of the Minneapolis model schools, conducted a training session for all available Boston principals. The purpose of this training session was three-fold: to provide a framework within which the Boston principals could focus on a planned approach to implementing Chapter 766; to suggest the creation of a support system that might assist in carrying out this planned approach; and to begin detailed planning with LTI/SE personnel and key Boston Administrators. A third voluntary meeting of principals was held shortly thereafter and four program designs were presented, that is, four different training and service models appropriate to the intent of Chapter 766 were presented in terms of how they might operate at the level of an individual school building.

The second phase involved the development and implementation of a pilot program in each of the system's six administrative areas. The LTI/SE, working with Boston school leaders and a variety of consultants, helped to establish working models of mainstreamed special education services in each administrative district to make broadly visible some of the possibilities of working toward full compliance with Chapter 766. These models were worked on, shaped, and fitted into the context of the school system throughout the summer and fall of 1973. Implementation took longer than had been predicted but by January-February, 1974, all six centers were operating. They served as the initial step in moving toward fuller compliance with the law.

A third phase centered on staff training. For the most part, training was focused on personnel who were conducting the pilot programs in the six city districts. An attempt was made to secure the cooperation of colleges and universities in the Boston area. Specificially, it was hoped that the special education department of one or another of the local institutions of higher education could be linked into each of the six pilot centers. This end seems to have been achieved in a most promising way, mostly through a series of meetings but also with modest sums of money to help with consultation or other special needs that were expressed by the colleges.

A fourth phase of the work in Boston was concerned with what might be called the "renewal" of the special services administrative system and attendant subsystem concerns. This activity was carried out mainly by Drs. Johnson and Gross of the Minneapolis Public Schools. Played out

against the subtle and confusing picture of a school board election, various internal problems, as well as the virtually constant attention paid by upper-level administrators to the vicissitudes of the desegregation situation, the renewal program has seemed to be successful although intermittent in rate of progress.

Clearly, the consultants (Johnson and Gross) were chosen--by the Boston school leaders in consultation with the LTI/SE--because they had been deeply involved in very similar problems and had conducted a renewal effort in the Minneapolis school system. The concept of coordinate status consultation[7] seemed the most promising of the potential interventions.

II. Technical Assistance and Organizational Renewal in Large-City Special Education Departments

Boston is a large eastern city school system. The organizational strengths and weaknesses of special education in its public school system are not unlike those of many other large city school systems in the United States today. Like other city school districts, Boston had moved aggressively in the past 10 to 15 years to expand special education service through categorical special classes which were located in regular buildings. This special class thrust was added to the special schools programs which were operated as far back as the early 1900s.

The special educational organizational and leadership systems in city school districts grew along with and, probably more accurately, out of this existing special class instructional program. However, these traditional special education instructional programs and organizational support systems have, in recent years, become inadequate to meet the new technology ordered by recent court decisions and the changing philosophy in the field itself.

Through self-initiated efforts and great pressure from the courts and state legislature, Boston has been struggling to expand and improve its educational programs for the handicapped. To accommodate an expanded and redefined special education service program, the school system is in the process of renewing its administrative and leadership support structure and systems. This section of the paper focuses on the specifics of these renewal efforts and on the role of the LTI/SE Technical Assistance Support System in the efforts.

Current Status

As of this writing, the Boston school system is faced with a number of major problems that are

[7]The term "coordinate status consultation" is used here in the same sense as in mental health consultation (described, for example, by Dr. Gerald Caplan), that is, in consultation, preacher to preacher, teacher to teacher, or barber to barber, rather than by specialists who are superordinate to the consultee. In this instance, associate superintendent level personnel were together with the LTI in a general support role. The Minneapolis consultants were very highly potent consultants because of their fresh experience in renewal activities in a city comparable to Boston in size and complexity.

not unlike those being struggled with in other urban areas. The system is, for example, attempting to (a) add new and extensive services for its unserved handicapped population, (b) restructure placement and referral policies and procedures consistent with handicapped persons' rights vis à vis the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution, (c) restructure categorical, segregated, and highly labeled service delivery systems, (d) locate the large numbers of additional specialized personnel necessary to staff new programs, and (f) develop administrative structure to enable leadership staff to effectively plan for and guide the total special education effort.

Confounding the system's efforts to accomplish the listed tasks are the liabilities, among others, of (a) being fiscally dependent, (b) being under legislative order to desegregate by fall of 1974, and (c) having all federal funds for the district withheld. Against this background, which makes the situation appear more bleak than it is in reality (there are positive trends and characteristics which are not given here for space reasons), this section relates in some detail the locus of intervention and the philosophy, design, and internal workings of the Technical Assistance Support System that is being used to assist the school district in creating and managing change.

The Special Services Department (Locus of Intervention)

In the Boston school system, as in most other city school systems, one department or division is accountable for developing educational services for the handicapped. Most systems, however, have failed historically to provide the funding necessary to maintain even minimally adequate programs for the handicapped, which has resulted in districts having to rely on categorical special classes as the only primary service delivery option. The Boston system has a similar history in that one department has been assigned accountability but, traditionally, has been given too few resources to provide adequate services. The Special Services Department, the internal organization responsible for special programs, has historically been organized for both leadership and service delivery purposes on a categorical basis, and it has relied heavily on special classes as the primary option available to the handicapped student.

Within this framework, the Associate Superintendent for Special Services, some 10 to 12 categorically defined assistants and supervisors, and several hundred professionals provide services with an annual budget of about $6-7 million. Most of the assistants and supervisors have been upwardly mobile within the system; as a rule, they have taught or served within the disciplines or categories they now represent.

Specific Problems Requiring Intervention

Faced with an emergency need to mobilize its special education service delivery and leadership resources to cope with court orders and new legislation, the Boston school system had taken several affirmative steps. The principal one was the creation of a cabinet level superintendency post (Associate Superintendent) for programs for the handicapped. This action was important in that it

not only gave major systemwide visibility to the mobilization effort but also clearly assigned accountability.

The following specific problems were identified by the Associate Superintendent and others as requiring immediate attention:

1. A service delivery system that was basically dysfunctional and required major restructuring and redirecting.
2. Leadership resources that were assigned to categorical rather than functional program tasks, and were staffed by technically trained specialists, most on an acting basis.
3. Limited understanding by general educators and special education staff of the reasons underlying the need for change.
4. A history of limited exposure to "outside" programs and leadership models.
5. The task of establishing a tactical and operations base for creating internal change was assigned to one person but without the benefit of adequate provisions for back-up resources.
6. No internal service models had been developed to serve as prototypes for meeting new requirements.
7. Time for "climate-setting" was very short; major changes would have to be designed and implemented within the space of 12-18 months.
8. The parameters of the special services organization, its philosophy, goals, objectives, management strategy, operational sybsystems, and communications systems were not adequately defined or articulated.

In sum, the system's internal resources were too limited to design and manage the extensive required changes without external technical assistance and support. In recognition of this need, the assistance of an LTI Technical Assistance Support Team was requested by the system in the early spring of 1973.

Coordinate Status Technical Assistance Team

Member Selection. Based on the premise that a system of coordinate status consultation would be necessary and desirable (time and reason would not allow engaging consultants unfamiliar with the problems of large-city special education operations), a team of two special education administrators, Johnson and Gross, from a similar size city, Minneapolis, were recruited as technical assistance consultants. Their recent experience in creating organizational change within a city school system gave them immediate situational references to and knowledge of the probable task at hand. Effective technical assistance intervention of a coordinate status genre depends heavily on empirical as well as theoretical references.

Support System Philosophy. External technical assistance support must assist personnel in the

client system to implement change, but for change to be most meaningful the technical system team should not be seen or function as the change agent. The change agent(s) must be internal if change is to be managed as an ongoing systematic aspect of the developing organization. Consequently, the technical assistance support effort took the role of assisting with the determination of priority needs and strategies and providing and coordinating training and/or other technical resources as necessary. A major function for the technical assistance team was the specific training of internal change agents in the design and management of specific changes, and in skills necessary for the diffusion of innovations or changes throughout the total system.

Since careful coordination and communication were required, especially because of timetable imperatives, the primary intervention team was limited to two consultants and the school system's Associate Superintendent for Special Services. Guidance control, fiscal support, and general consultation on policy and strategy were provided by LTI personnel and by a support cadre of several system executives from both superordinate and peer status positions. The model of this overall configuration is shown in Figure 1.

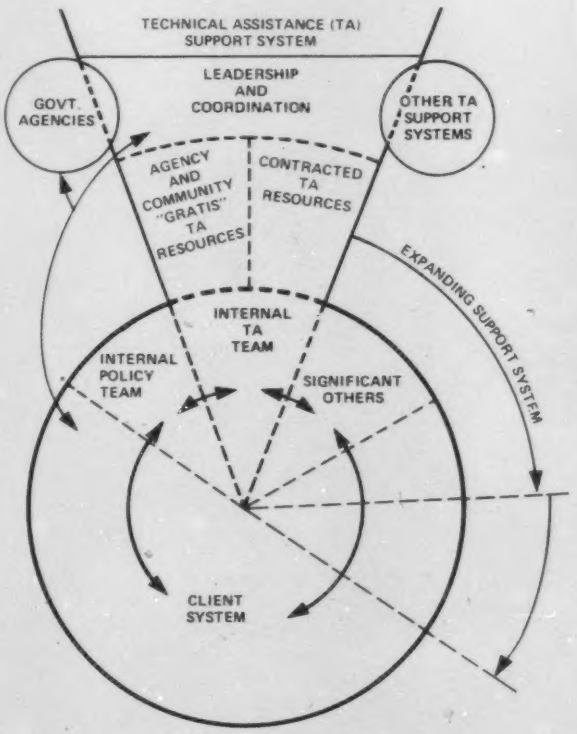

Figure 1. Technical assistance relationships model for organizational renewal (Johnson, 1975, p. 110).

In this model, technical assistance persons, however defined, and the internal change agent constitute the primary interface with the system and function as an Internal Technical Assistance (ITA)

team. Its mission is to define and initiate changes within the total system. This team becomes, then, the day-to-day, on-site apex of a total phalanx of organized support, with the ty, and configuration of resources used contingent on ITA team defined needs and the legitimating of the needs by the Internal Policy Team and the Support System Leadership and Coordination arm. External resources include state, local and extra-community resources; the only limitation is the availability of fiscal resources with which to purchase technical assistance and other resources not freely available from related agencies.

Dotted lines in the model (Fig. 1) represent permeable information (feedback) and influence membranes; solid-line, two-way arrows represent "as required" internal feedback loops. The "significant others" are those persons immediately targeted for involvement in the change process; and the "internal Policy Team" is the system's mechanism for governing and guiding the support system effort and providing feedback to the Support System. Solid lines without arrows represent boundaries that are unique to each system, be it client or support. Solid lines with undirectional arrow the right of the figure represent the support system's potential for expanding to all additional significant others.

In essence, then, the model support system functions as (a) a funnel for or a locus of resources which are needed to assist any client system in creating and managing change, and (b) a determiner of the extent and configuration of resources necessary, based on recommendation from an internal technical assistance team which is composed of both a specified, internal to the system, change agent, and a person or persons designated by the external support system.

III. Theoretical Considerations

In the Boston school system, the major presenting problems required solutions which could be attained only through major organizational change. Thus, the primary business of the Technical Assistance Support Team was to help the school system to define, organize for, implement, and manage change. Basic to any change operation, especially the major organizational changes contemplated by the Boston system, are various assumptions on change. Several of the assumptions follow (Johnson, 1973):

1. Change is more than some alteration in something. As defined by Miles (1964), change is that which is willed rather than natural, planned rather than haphazard, and specific rather than general.

2. Change is a process which, if it is to be managed so that what is willed comes to fruition in both form and substance, requires specific leadership attention and focus. Some one person or persons privy to and a part of the organization targeted for change must advocate and manage

processes and strategies for creating defined change. While the content of the idea or innovation base can be externally evolved, and ongoing external technical assistance provided, the implementation process must be constantly advocated and managed by an internal agent.

Carlson and Gallagher (1965) used the terms "content initiator" and "process initiator" to describe the difference between the person who defines the content or substance of an innovation and the person who initiates and gives substance to the process of translating the idea into practice. Gallagher (1965) referenced the distinction between "non-directed" and "directed" change and defined directed change as follows:

> A structured situation in which an advocate interferes actively and purposely with the culture of the potential acceptor. In this system an advocate conscientiously selects elements in a target system (that which is to be changed) and by stimulating the acceptance of innovations, inhibiting the practice of prior patterns of behavior, or, as is frequently the case, doing both of these things simultaneously, he manages the directions of change. (p. 39)

In assuming, then, that a specific leadership person or advocate is necessary to effectively manage change within the system, we are making the assumption that circumstances call for a "directed" change system.

3. Not all formal organizations are equally open to planned change, but all of them can be changed to some degree through planned change strategies. As a group, large-city school systems have never been particularly known for openness to innovation or change. Although some major exceptions do exist, it is clear, historically, that the Boston school system is not particularly known for acceptance of change, and has been characterized by some persons as rather political, traditional, and fairly resistant to either external or internal changes. For example, only during 1973 did the system authorize the employment of persons external to the school system for major system leadership responsibilities. Principals, directors, supervisors, and other key management persons were almost always persons who had grown up in or gained credibility within the school system.

The perspective that all organizations can be changed to some degree through planned change strategies is necessary if the expectation for change is to be realized. Obviously, the rate of change in given organizations will vary according to variables related to organizational readiness, such as those suggested by Gallagher (1965) and Johnson (1973).

4. There is no way to conceptualize, direct, or manage change. Variations in type of presenting problem, organizational readiness, style of the change agent, availability of resources, and other factors require one to conceptualize and manage change in somewhat of an eclectic manner. Several

conceptualized change models or processes are available, such as those discussed by Netzer and Eve (1970), Knezevich (1969), and Dalton, Barnes and Zaleznik (1968). Obviously, although one does not always engage in formal model-building exercises prior to initiating change operations, one must at least be familiar with various theoretical and functional perspectives and be willing to use aspects of existing models that seem to be germane and reasonable to the situation.

Support System Change Model

For reasons related to the client system's readiness, the need to create substantive change quickly, and the leanings of the technical assistance team as well as other reasons, the adopted approach was somewhat more organization-oriented than administrator-oriented (Knezevich, 1969); it placed more emphasis on the importance of task, structure, process, and technology (Chapple & Sayles, 1961) than on person orientation (Bennis, 1966); and it was more rational-deductive than opportunistic in nature (Braybrooke & Lindblom, 1963). In other words, the primary focus of the support system team and the internal change agent was on bringing about change or organizational renewal through rigorously defining the task, developing the change strategy, establishing necessary processes and structures, utilizing management technology, and creating organizational readiness. The overall structural model for using an external technical assistance support team has been discussed earlier and is illustrated in Figure 1.

Technical Assistance Process

The process of vending technical assistance to a particular client system is generic enough to meet varied technical assistance needs, particularly if major organizational renewal is contemplated. As space will not permit a full description of each technical assistance phase of the process, each is only briefly discussed. The several technical assistance phases used with this client system were as follows:

I. Preliminary Negotiations.
II. Needs Assessment.
III. Goal Setting.
IV. Model Building
V. Task, Strategy, and Accountability Specification.
VI. Implementation.
VII. Outcome Evaluation.
VIII. Recycle.

Included in all eight phases were the generic activities of legitimation, process evaluation, maintenance of decision record, task and strategy reprograming, and change agent training. Figure 2 represents this configuration. Implementation of the technical assistance or "change management"

process depicted by Figure 2 requires, at any given time, specific focus on one time-specific phase and on the five generic activities. Primary responsibility for carrying out the activities rests with the Technical Assistance Consultant for process evaluation, task and strategy reprograming, and change agent training, and with the internal change agent for legitimation and decision recording. Technical Assistance Consultants, however, maintain overall responsibility for ensuring that all generic activities are conducted.

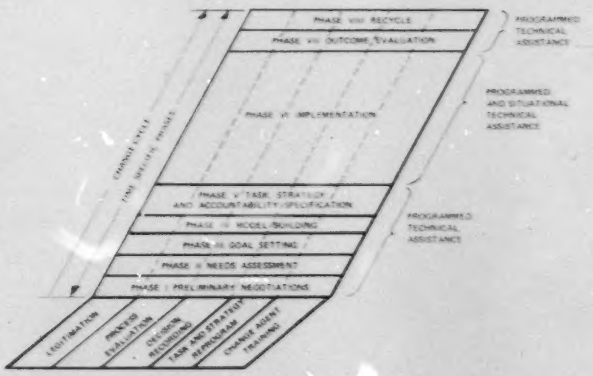

Figure 2. The technical assistance process: Relation of generic activities to time specific phases (Johnson, 1975, p. 114).

The right margin of Figure 2 illustrates the type of technical assistance generally used in the various phases. Phases I through V, and VII and VIII, usually require a highly structured and programed technical assistance format, the implementation phase (VI) uses programed technical assistance only as specific tasks require it and as crisis or special problems affecting implementation (goal attainment) occur.

A brief description of each phase pertinent to this change management process, as used in Boston, follows:

Generic Activities

Legitimation. "To make legitimate" is a process vital to creating change. Sponsors, superordinates, subordinates, constituencies, and others all play varying roles in providing legitimation for specific change goals and activities. Each prospective change goal and all attendant activities must be analyzed in terms of the need for legitimation, and in terms of legitimation sources. Legitimation activities are productively applied not only to formal organizational legitimation, but also to securing support of any other group or individual in a position to influence the proposed change.

Process Evaluation. Each time-specific phase should include at least one review of process and progress to date, with Phase VI (Implementation) subject to several process evaluation sessions. Simply stopping, in a formal sense, to ask how this or that worked out, and are we on schedule and still target specific, or to review actions taken to date often produces the insight necessary to determine future steps.

Decision Recording. A track record of decisions made regarding models, strategies, assignments agreed on, assumptions, understandings, and timetable must be maintained as a useful tool for verifying that actions were taken, for communicating to significant others, and for reference to earlier decisions or actions.

Task and Strategy Reprograming. Any plan designed to create change in formal organizations represents at best the most informed guesses of those persons originally involved, and these informed guesses must be refined and expanded through experiences. Also, it is important at and during each phase that new timetables be developed to compensate for their tendency to go askew.

Change Agent Training. As noted earlier, change needs specific leadership attention and focus, and external agents are not appropriate in that role beyond a certain point. Most administrators, however high the risk quotient, are generally poorly prepared in the use of change strategies, and need training in their use. Technical Assistance Consultants must insure that every interaction with the internal change agent is a learning or broadening experience, and they must train the change agent in sufficient depth to allow independent applications in the absence of technical consultation.

Time-Specific Phases

A brief description of each of the time-specific change cycle phases follows:

Phase I. Preliminary Negotiations. In this phase, general brainstorming is conducted about what needs to be done and how technical consultants may be helpful, and the needs assessment phase is designed. The initial timetable through Phase II is projected and various contractual negotiations, if any, are negotiated.

Phase II. Needs Assessment. The phase consists of activities designed to define more clearly the scope and complexity of the problems or expressed needs and can range from the collection and review of documents related to items such as budget and organization, to a full-blown needs assessment process using full instrumentation and one of several needs assessment models.

Phase III. Goal Setting. Based on data obtained and reviewed during the needs assessment phase, the defined problem is translated into what one wants to do about the problem. This translation is in goal format. The overall targeting process constitutes the cornerstone for Phases IV through VIII.

Phase IV. Model Building. Within technical assistance activities designed to renew organizations, model building is the activity that projects various organizational modifications in alternative

ways. Through defined interaction and consensus, the significant parties agree on what is to be implemented in Phase VI. If the timetable allows, field testing of the models, if they are original, is usually indicated; if they are not, best guesses and empirical evidence eclectically collected and applied must do. Obviously, the model developed for implementation in Phase VI must be relevant to and show promise of the ability to achieve those goals stated as an outcome of Phase III.

Phase V. Task, Strategy, and Accountability Specification. This phase is the design period for the implementation process. It consists of establishing the timetable for the remainder of the cycle, determining which significant others should be planfully involved in or touched by the process, assigning tasks, predicting resistors, defining when the external Technical Assistance Consultants should function in a situational manner (unpredicted client system or change agent request for assistance), and scheduling training activities as necessary for the change agent and others.

Phase VII. Outcome Evaluation. In this phase, it is determined whether Phase VI activities have been successful in attaining the goals specified in Phase III.

Phase VIII. Recycle. Contingent on the success in reaching preestablished goals, either a new change cycle to complete unfinished business is established/negotiated or the support system is expanded to encompass a new set of goals (See. Fig. 1, "Expanding Support System" dimension).

IV. Application of Theoretical Model to Client System

Perspective. The Special Services Department of the Boston school system was the primary focus for the application of the change model depicted in Figure 2. Unfortunately, space does not permit a full account of the specific activities conducted in Boston, but several activities follow in summary form to suggest the scope of the work:

Phase I. The "Brainstorming" activity and interactions took place over most of the year prior to actually beginning Phase III and involved the exchange of site visits between personnel of the Boston district, and Minneapolis, the coordinate status consultants' district, as well as other activities.

Phase II. In Boston the needs assessment activities consisted primarily of reviewing existing data on the status of the organization, discussing aspects of the organization with various persons within and external to the school system, and holding several "problem definition" sessions. The latter resulted in defining the following two major problem areas:

> The current service system had no visible and defined "mainstream effort" that could meet the requirements of court ordered and/or legislated changes.
>
> The leadership and management structure/system, as currently staffed and organized, could not effectively cope with changing organizational and client needs.

Phase III. The two primary needs arenas identified in Phase II were translated into two primary goals, both related to the overall goal of renewing the Boston Special Services Department to enable

the organization to carry out more effectively its mission. These two primary goals were,

1. to establish a demonstration program for mainstreaming children with special needs into regular education; and
2. to restructure or reorganize the Special Services Department leadership and management support systems so that they would be consistent with a full "levels of service" delivery system.

Subsumed in these two goals were several additional goal statements. They were,

1. to develop an organizational and delivery structure to comply with newly legislated requirements;
2. to structure leadership assignments consistent with a functional accountability-based leadership system;
3. to maximize utilization of resources external to the Department of Special Services in implementing programs;
4. to support the development of integrating or mainstreaming special education programs;
5. to improve delivery of programs and services to the more seriously handicapped;
6. to develop an organization responsible to changing demography and other variables;
7. to develop programs that minimize needs for labels for children with special needs;
8. to develop resources for allocation and decision systems that insure the due process and equal rights of children and their parents; and
9. to maximize the use of existing leadership positions.

Phase IV. Model building for the second goal began with the development of necessary assumptions to determine the extent of choices relevant to the type of organization, and to state constraints assumed to be extant. The following assumptions were generated:

1. The reviewed leadership structure would operate with current staff complement.
2. Develop the model for organization in steps with Step I targeted on the Department of Special Services, Step II on the Department of Supportive Services.
3. The current categorical leadership organization is inconsistent with contemporary philsophy, needs, and existing legislation.
4. The renewal leadership organization should be formulated by March 30, 1975 and implemented by September 1, 1974.
5. As a means of insuring compliance with current legislative requirements, organizational renewal is the priority task for the Department of Special Services for 1973-74.
6. Coordination and interface with general education is mandated.
7. The prevailing reason for organizational renewal is to develop systems and organization that maximize the life chances of children with special needs.

8. Renewal will be accomplished internally but external resources will also be used.

Several organizational models were eventually generated and discussed. These models were reviewed by a select group within the client system, and one model was selected. While space does not permit full discussion of that model, suffice it to say that the model selected represented a radical departure from the existing organizational structure.

Model building for goal #1 (mainstreaming) was less protracted than for goal #2, as several well-established mainstreaming models were already operating in other school districts. The Minneapolis model was eventually selected for installation as a demonstration program within the client system.

Phase V. The design developed for implementing the service system renewal and the renewal of the organizational structure was fairly detailed and many faceted. The following outline provides only a summary of several major steps:

Mainstream Goal

Preliminary Activities

A. Site visit of staff of the Boston Public Schools to Minneapolis (June 1973).
   1. Conferences with special educators of the Minneapolis Public Schools and staff of the Leadership Training Institute/Special Education.
   2. Visits to Harrison School and Seward School mainstream programs.
B. Inservice training sessions for all principals, head masters, and department directors of the Boston School System (June 1973).
   1. Presentation of the Concept of mainstreaming.
   2. Presentation of an application of the concept--Harrison School (Minneapolis) Resource Program.
C. Inservice training session for selected principals and staff of the Boston School System (June 1973).
   1. Detailed presentation of the Harrison model.
   2. Detailed presentation of the Seward model.
   3. Detailed presentation of the Northern Iowa model.
   4. Detailed presentation of the Vermont Consulting Teacher model.
   5. Detailed presentation of the projected Boston School System model.
D. Conference for the development of the plan for the implementation of the Project (August 1973).

Subsequent Activities

A. Initiation of action program for the implementation of the Project (October 1973).
B. Fifteen to 20 action steps were outlined, including employment of staff, selection of target schools, etc.

Organizational Structure Goal

1. Initial conference between Boston school system (Associate Superintendent for Special Services and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent) and LTI/SE representatives (coordinate status consultants).
2. Determination of the nature of the extent of the renewal: total leadership structure vs. subsystems.
3. Decision to undertake renewal of total leadership structure in the following six-step sequence:
   a. Formation of Ad Hoc Planning Task Force with membership of four persons: Associate Superintendent for Special Services, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Educational Planning Center representative, State Department of Special Education representative.
   b. Formation of Staff Invitational Planning Committee.
   c. Development of Internal Consensus--Staffing Training.
   d. Internal and External Legitimization:
      Internal--School Committee, Board of Superintendents.
      External--Parent Groups, State Departments of Education, Mental Health.
      Legitimization at three possible levels:
         Awareness
         Consensus
         Approval
   e.. Staff to Position Assignment (existing staff to new positions, and/or recruit).
   f. Subsystem Development (2-year timetable).

Phase VI. The phase is still operational. Major activities to date have been revising the timetable, altering strategy, meeting unplanned for contingencies. Current status of the leadership reorganization process rests at the "Staff to Position Assignment" step (3.e. on outline). The mainstream project is well under way; to date it has created significant impact on the school system and is operating at about Phase VII.

Phases VII & VIII. These phases have not been activated as of this date; they will be started at the completion of Phase VI.

V. Summary

For the past three years, a fairly sizable and defined technical assistance support system has provided varying resources to the Boston school system. The major target has been to assist the system to strengthen its ability to provide quality education and services for all handicapped persons. Methods used to assist the system to date have included the provision of coordinate status consul-

tation, funds for site visits, training opportunities, general advice and planning help, and liaison with various institutions of higher education. So far progress has been encouraging. When Phase VII (Outcome Evaluation) is completed, more information on the progress in relation to the goals will be available.

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Mainstreaming Handicapped Students: The Norfolk Plan

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Technical assistance, as envisioned by the Special Education Developmental and Technical Assistance Center, is a support system by which school personnel who need a particular service are brought together with individuals or sources of information that can satisfy the need. The Technical Assistance Center may be said to act, in part, like an educational brokerage agency. The focus of the Center is training at all levels of education. The term "teacher trainer" is broadly defined to include relevant personnel in local and state education agencies as well as in institutions of higher education. The idea is for the Technical Assistance Center to facilitate the training of such personnel so they, in turn, through pre- and inservice training, can provide teachers with the necessary techniques to modify educational programs at the local school level. In this sense a trained teacher responsible for inservice training in an area of mainstreaming handicapped students becomes a teacher trainer.

In the case of mainstreaming handicapped students, there appears to be a gap between what public school systems already know about this concept and its implementation and what they need or would like to know to be able to introduce the program in their local school buildings. The Technical Assistance Center is determined to help interested school systems bridge that gap. Another aspect of the Technical Assistance Center's program is to aid public school systems in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of mainstream programs designed specifically to meet local needs. The planning, training, implementation, and evaluation aspects of the Assistance program were utilized and incorporated into a model public school system for change known as the Norfolk Plan.

The Client System

Norfolk, the largest city in the commonwealth of Virginia, has a school population of 49,500 children. Considered an impact area in need of change, the city has been the recipient of substantial federal funding. Because school system officials indicated a commitment to the concept of mainstreaming through an expressed willingness to implement its purposes, the Norfolk Public School System was invited to become a recipient of technical assistance from the Special Education Developmental and Technical Assistance Center.

In a series of meetings beginning in November 1973, different school system personnel presented reasons for instituting the mainstreaming process in Norfolk. A major concern was that a dispropor-

tionate number of minority group students were in classes for the educable mentally retarded. The school system had already begun the process of returning children with learning and/or behavioral disorders to the regular classroom with the support of various programs and itinerant personnel. OLE (Optimized Learning Environment Program), IDP (Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Prescription Centers), and LEAP (Learning Environment to Activate Potential) gave some indications of the diversified approaches to mainstreaming which were being tried. Although numerous categories of personnel had been trained to provide supportive services for these programs, their roles had never been clearly delineated. Furthermore, support personnel and enabling funds were in short supply. A number of students, identified and evaluated for special education programs, had been retained in the regular classrooms, but they were not provided with special services because of the limited personnel and funds; and many children categorized as severely handicapped were not being served because facilities and funds were lacking. The Center's conferees felt that the first group could receive immediate attention through a mainstreaming effort with supportive services, and the latter group could be served in the self-contained classrooms if some of the more mildly handicapped students were moved from the self-contained classroom to the regular classrooms and provided with supportive services there.

In outlining its program and purposes, the Special Education Developmental and Technical Assistance Center assured the school system representatives that the program was supportive rather than directive, that is, that the Center's efforts would be concentrated on making the ongoing mainstreaming movement successful. In its conceptualization of its role as a change agent, the Center recognized that it could not and should not impose its "will" on the school system; rather, the Center was prepared to operate within the limits of the needs determined by the school system, and to incorporate selectively whatever means to the goal the system provided. Only in this way could long-range changes occur in the school system.

Subsequent meetings included members of the Divisions of Pupil Personnel Services and Curriculum and Instruction. Discussions moved from the general to the specific--from a needs assessment to the proposal of a plan for change and for obtaining technical assistance to achieve the goal of more of a normalization system for handicapped children. Included in the plan was a "modeling concept"; that is, three elementary and one junior-high schools would be selected as models from among those that would request to participate in the mainstreaming program. In these four schools, mildly to moderately handicapped children would be moved from essentially self-contained special classes to regular classrooms in a continuous process of normalization. The latter would be based on a cascade principle and would assure a continuum of services for all handicapped children with the emphasis on mainstreaming. The services and resources mobilized for this program would be made available to everyone in the participating schools to improve the quality of education for all students. Follow-up would be continuous to increase the multiplier effect within the model schools as well as in the other schools of the entire system.

The plan for mainstreaming handicapped students was developed with the central office personnel, principals, teachers, and local university personnel, all of whom participated in the decisions affecting the program's design and inception and will participate in the implementation and evaluation stages.

At the final planning meeting, the Norfolk school system representatives clarified their goals, evaluated current programs in relation to mainstreaming, and refined the needs assessment to judge the changes that were needed and how the system might best meet those needs with the funds and services which the Center would provide. Meeting with different groups of system personnel, the Center staff was able to identify those aspects of the system which were critical to the successful creation of a climate for change. After about five meetings, the Center was accepted as an agency that could provide needed assistance to the Norfolk Public School System to meet the needs of several divisions while tying together the elements that had operated previously almost as independent entities.

Technical Assistance Paradigm

A technical assistance paradigm, a modification of the model developed by Maynard C. Reynolds[1], was used to delineate priority areas of concern (Fig. 1). The Technical Assistance Paradigm serves different purposes:

1. It is an entry into a system in which mainstream priorities have not been established and offers something in hand to react to for purposes of delineating areas of immediate concern.
2. It encourages the system to concentrate the need for aid specifically on critical areas, as well as enabling the Technical Assistance Center to organize its materials and services more concisely as it attempts to provide the appropriate assistance where indicated.
3. It saves time and energy when used in the planning of a total needs assessment program.

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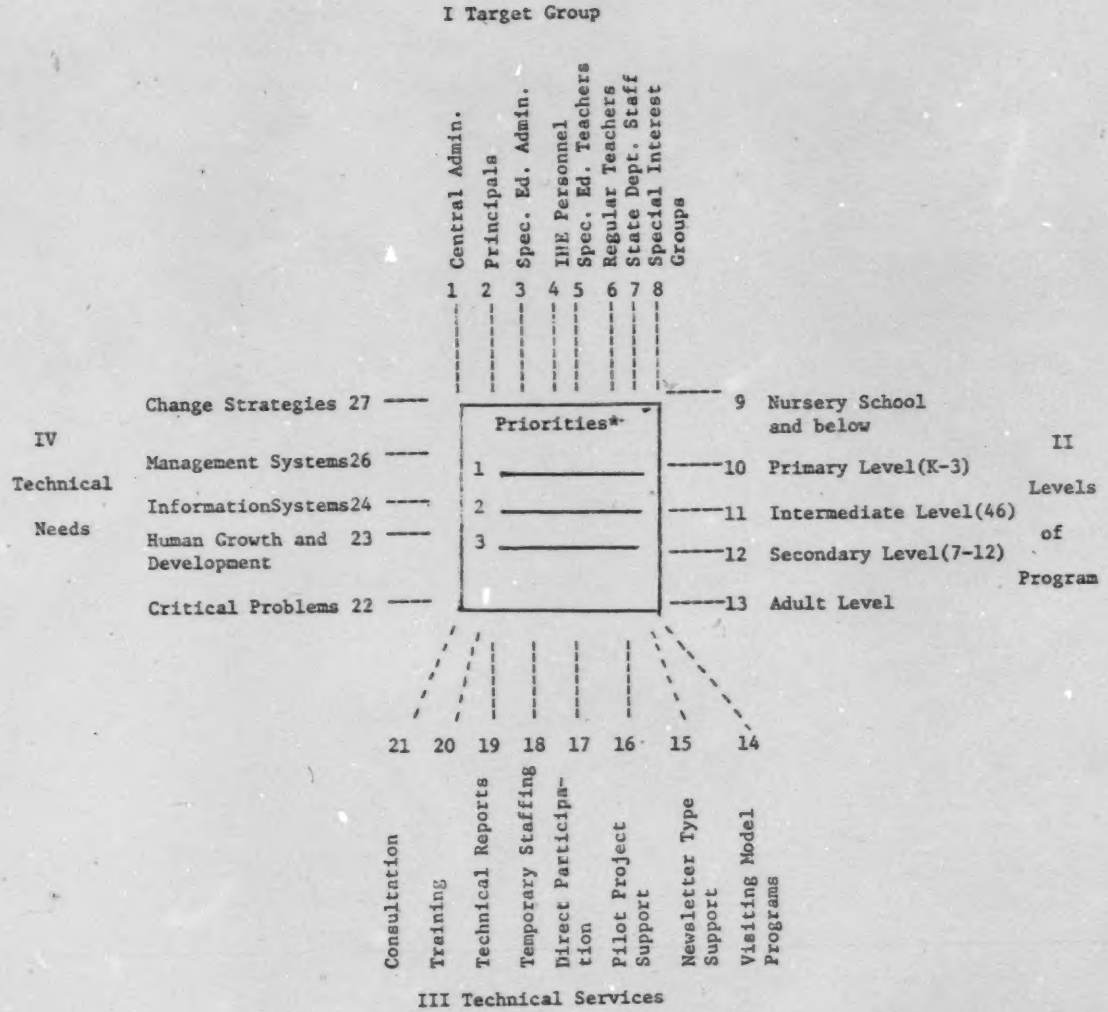
[1]M. C. Reynolds, Technical assistance: Some possibilities. In P. H. Mann (Ed.), Mainstream special education, issues and perspectives in urban centers. Proceedings of the University of Miami Conference on Special Education in the Great Cities. Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami, 1974, pp. 154-164. (Distributed by the Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.)



Example of a Technical Assistance Cluster

*Priorities	Explanation
2, 10, 27, 21	2 Principals of 10 Primary Level in 27 Change Strategies by means of 21 Consultants

Figure 1. Technical Assistance Paradigm.

The Plan

Objectives for Handicapped Students set by the Norfolk Public School System

I. The general objectives or goals of the Norfolk Public School System for the education of handicapped children were specified as follows:

A. To provide effective educational programs for the mainstreaming of the majority of mildly handicapped youngsters into the regular classrooms.

B. To provide effective educational programs in essentially self-contained special education classrooms, with opportunities for integrative education in the Norfolk public schools, for pupils with greater or severe degrees of handicapping conditions.

C. To contract with outside agencies to provide effective education for profoundly handicapped pupils for whom the Norfolk system is responsible.

II. Objectives of the Mainstream Plan

A. Systems Development

1. Improvement of the system of identification, diagnosis, classification, and assignment of handicapped pupils.

2. Development of a noncategorical resource model.

3. Development of a comprehensive (interdisciplinary) support system for the delivery of special education services.

4. Optimization of the use of the learning environment.

5. Better understanding and use of:

a. Supplies and materials.

b. Paraprofessionals and other ancillary personnel.

c. Space.

B. Staff Development

1. Training administrators, principals and central office personnel in:

a. Management skills in alternative mainstreaming plans.

b. Awareness of available support systems.

c. Role definition of supportive staffs.

2. Preservice prior to implementation of mainstreaming:

a. To provide a common core of skills to all teachers involved in the process including special education and regular teachers.

b. To provide individualized training for the different role groups in order to allow the continuum of services to meet the ongoing needs of the mainstreaming program.

c. To provide skills to all teachers in human interaction so that the interface between regular and special education can be as smooth as possible.

d. Some of the skills to be taught involve:

1. Diagnostic-prescriptive skills.
2. Behavioral management.
3. Theories on the process of learning.
4. Classroom organization and management.
5. Personality development of children.

3. To train and integrate the supportive staff into the concept of mainstreaming as it is being developed for the Norfolk Public Schools.
4. Inservice should be continuous throughout the year, meeting individual teacher needs through the use of local university consultants.

C. Pupil Development

1. Students grow toward greater self-direction within the regular classrooms.
2. Improved motivation and self-concept of all students.
3. Improved achievement of all students, particularly those who are being mainstreamed, or those who have been identified as potential "failures."
4. Increased opportunity for social interaction.

D. Community Development

1. Development of improved communication systems to increase parents' awareness of the objectives and advantages of mainstreaming for all children.
2. Development of a parent involvement system.
3. Development of parental consultation system.

E. Public School-University Interaction

To involve local university personnel in the public school program in the ongoing inservice phase of the training of the teachers as well as in the follow-up activities. The local teacher training institution must become an integral part of the total plan for any long-term effects to be realized.

Sequence of Activities to Achieve Objectives of the Plan

A. Initial Planning and Needs Assessment

Technical assistance representatives met with various personnel in the school system on several occasions to clarify the objectives of the school system. The idea was to bring together the various strategic components of the school system to plan and organize any systematic movement in the direction of mainstreaming and to have the school system state its needs and how it can best use the Center funds in the mainstreaming process. A needs assessment provided the incentive to set up the plan.

B. School Selection

The "model schools" (one junior high school and three elementary schools) were chosen for the initial exemplary programs in mainstreaming. Early in the planning, principals who had indicated a positive attitude toward mainstreaming were asked to participate in the decision-making process. In doing so, the principals expressed their concerns and helped dictate the activities that would follow. All selected schools would have at least one class for educable mentally retarded students.

C. Meeting with Faculty Members

The Center staff along with local university personnel and central office personnel met with all the faculties of the selected schools and all special education personnel for the entire system for the following purposes:

1. To acquaint the personnel with the work of the Center and the objectives and consequences of the mainstreaming process.
2. To permit the faculties to become involved in the decision-making process entailed in this program so that they might express their concerns and select those teachers from their schools who would be most receptive to special training in the area of mainstreaming handicapped youngsters. The teachers to be selected are those with the capability of influencing their colleagues so that a multiplier effect could occur, beginning with a single class and moving throughout the schools and finally the school system.
3. To inform the special education personnel of their very important roles in the mainstreaming concept and to assuage the feeling of "threat of job" and, further, to involve them in the planning of the training activities to follow.

D. Information Dissemination

To provide a continuous flow of information to the system involving model programs dealing with the various aspects of mainstreaming as related to their objectives.

E. On-Site Visitation

Seven members of the administrative staff visited the Houston School System, an exemplary eclectic model then under the direction of Dr. Charles Meisgeier. The attending administrators represented Pupil Personnel, Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and the principals involved.

F. Summer Institute for Teachers and Administrators[2]

Sixteen teachers will attend the University of Miami for an intensive training experience over a two-week block of time. These teachers will include one special education teacher, one resource room teacher, and three regular teachers from each of the model schools, except for one

[2]This paper was written prior to the summer institute.

school which is to send only its resource room teacher. The school system will send, at its own expense, additional teachers to receive training. The Center has agreed to fund the training of 10 administrators for the second week of the training session. The purpose of the institute shall be:

1. To provide a common core of skills to all teachers who will be involved in meeting the needs of youngsters in mainstream classrooms.
2. To provide individualized instruction to the different groups attending so that each might come away with the skills necessary to maintain a successful continuum of services in meeting the needs of youngsters who are mainstreamed. Further, the different training will allow for a differentiated staffing pattern to reinforce and maintain the positiveness of all teachers as the mainstream program proceeds.
3. (a) To provide administrators with an overview of those skills being taught teachers. (b) To give administrators special training in the organizational aspects and alternatives of the mainstreaming program, particularly as it related to their schools. (c) To allow a common ground of understanding and commitment to be built between administrators and teachers (special education and regular education) which, it is hoped, will permit the program to move ahead without being torn apart by internal friction.

Summary

Teachers, especially those in today's large urban centers, who may be lockstepped in the traditional modes of grouping students and, in many cases, forces into a curriculum selected and imposed from outside the reality of the classroom, baffled by the mystique of teaching systems and educational assessment, and threatened by parents demanding change, are fearful of the repercussions of accountability. There is a reluctance to give up the safety of labels for children and a resistance to accepting educational alternatives that may help the atypical learner, especially when decisions for the placement of the student are made by ancillary personnel away from the classroom.

The demand for new teachers has slowed down. Institutions of higher learning and school systems are faced with the responsibility of adding improved educational technology to the repertoire of teachers who are already employed. The diagnostic-prescriptive approach is such a technology; it is designed to help education become more responsive to the continuous changes in our society.

As the competition increases for the decreasing number of available positions in regular education, and as recognition by special education and regular education of the right of all children to an education regardless of labels becomes a major issue, we can no longer afford to pay lip service to the quality of preservice and inservice education for teachers. The tight job market will gradually force

institutions of higher education to become more accountable in the preparation of educators to meet the needs of all children. The days of providing beginning teachers with enough basic skills and enthusiasm to get through the first few years on the job are over. Pressures on the new teachers as well as on experienced career teachers have cut the allowable percentage of failure to close to zero.

The diagnostic-prescriptive approach to educating children, implied in this program for the Norfolk Public School System, suggests that the settings for handicapped students should be based on their needs rather than on the number of allocated units that must be filled. Primarily, however, the approach is used to determine through task analysis what it is that children need to know to succeed in schools as they are now constituted. By delineating the critical skills necessary for success in the academic areas of reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic, the teacher trained in the use of the diagnostic-prescriptive approach can then identify children's deficits in the language areas that prevent them from being successful in the given task. The training program suggested here is designed to fill the gap between what teachers already know about how to teach students and what they need to know to better individualize instruction for the learning-handicapped individual.

Technical Assistance Delivery Systems and the Philadelphia Project

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This paper has been organized into two major sections. In the first, I attempt to look at the provision of technical assistance from a general point of view, and in the second, I narrow the focus to a brief analysis of a specific experience related to the provision of technical assistance. In a final very brief summary, I touch upon the concept of linking structures and propose a model based upon some of the ideas explored in this paper.

Technical Assistance: General Comments

As one approaches technical assistance, at least two considerations ought to be weighed. (a) Professionals providing such assistance should consider the range of relationships that might be developed between the technical assistance team and the client system. (b) Serious attention should be devoted to the development of appropriate change strategies. Both of these considerations are developed in greater detail in the following sections of this paper.

At the risk of oversimplifying, it appears that the various types of consultant/client relationships are distributed along a continuum. At one end would be a totally nondirective or heavily client-centered relationship, and at the other end, a highly directive or heavily consultant-centered relationship. For example, the relationship at the highly directive, consultant-centered end of the continuum might center about the model(s) or materials developed by the consultant. The consultant would then attempt to "sell" the prepackaged program to one or more client systems. This model is not different in concept from such curriculum programs as BSCS Biology, PSSC Physics, PLAN, and the like. The nature of this relationship centers primarily on training the client in the use of the model or materials.

At the other end of this spectrum, the nondirective relationship centers about the needs expressed by the client and their fulfillment to the greatest extent possible by the consultants. In this model, the role of the consultant is to provide support or back-up service. With this type of relationship, it is much more difficult for the technical assistance team to deliver, obviously. Between these two extremes exists a variety of relationships encompassing differing proportions of nondirective/directive (client-centered/consultant-centered) elements. Further, the consultant/client

relationship might "slide" up or down the continuum as the relationship matures. It would seem, therefore, that one of the first considerations for the provision of technical assistance relates to the nature of the consultant/client relationship that must be developed.

The essence of technical assistance revolves about the dynamic of change. It seems appropriate, therefore, to spend a few moments looking at the change process itself. Perhaps Machiavelli summed up the situation when he noted,

> There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things, because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions, and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new.

Katz (1971), in his very critical examination of educational structures, made the following statement:

> Today's educational structures are historical products; they represent patterns that have become deeply imbedded in American society and are enormously resistant to change. The techniques with which the system maintains equilibrium have themselves become traditions. (p. xix)

The bureaucratic nature of the public education enterprise impedes change. A reward system that stimulates conformity rather than creativity and an overall inability to deal administratively with new ideas, are two characteristics of bureaucratic organizations which are found in school systems.

Perhaps a brief examination of some organizational characteristics may produce insights into the difficulties related to attempts to bring about change. Organizations exist to regularize and codify a worker's relationship to his work. He and his co-workers have role expectations and assigned roles which are the result of the organization's attempt to achieve a level of stability to get its work done. Proposed changes threaten this hard-won stability and forces of resistance appear as a <u>normal</u> response.

Institutions (e.g., universities and public school systems) also exist to codify and regularize the relationship between members of the institutions and their work. To propose a change, however slight, in such a relationship generates anxiety and threat. Even those persons who are unhappy with the status quo often prefer its stability to a situation that is changing and unknown.

Opposition to change, it seems to me, is a rather normal response for organizations that ought to be working hard to develop and maintain stability. Also, the fact that the act of innovation is not without personal hazards accounts for some of the reluctance to innovate. For instance, Nicolas Copernicus was almost burned at the stake for declaring that the earth revolved about the sun. Bruno was executed for declaring that there were many suns. William Harvey, father of modern medicine, was denounced as a quack when he stated that the heart pumps blood through the veins and arteries. Lee DeForrest, holder of more than 300 patents relating to radio and television, was accused of mail fraud when he attempted to raise funds for research on the vacuum tube which, he

said, would make the transmission of the human voice across the Atlantic possible.

Fordyce and Weil (1971) stated,

> Change is the greatest threat to the survival of an organism or organization, and organizational survival is a primary responsibility of management. (p. 3)

If Fordyce and Weil are correct, then one of the greatest tasks facing the manager or administrator is guiding the organization through the change process.

In looking at the provision of technical assistance to school systems as they attempt to mainstream handicapped youngsters, we might try to assess the magnitude of the change required. Chin and Downey (1973) have developed a rather handy scale of change difficulty in which they identified five levels of change (pp. 524-525). Further, they ranked the levels in terms of disruptiveness to the target system's equilibrium. These levels, ranked from the least to most disruptive, are as follows:

1. Substitution
2. Alternation
3. Perturbations and Variations
4. Reconstruction
5. Value reorientation

Mainstreaming is at least a change at the reconstruction level and, quite probably, it actually represents the most difficult level--value reorientation. It seems painfully obvious, therefore, that the prospect of change is properly viewed with apprehension by individuals--either singly or collectively--as members of organizations. To ignore or play down the importance of the threat posed by change is foolhardy.

It is this observer's conclusion, therefore, that the technical assistance team must have several sets of competencies. It should assign high priority to the development of competence in helping the client organization develop viable structures for working through the change process itself. A relatively new discipline has emerged that deals with such technology--organizational development (OD). It is suggested, therefore, that the technical assistance team be composed of individuals who have some degree of familiarity with organizational design and developmental techniques in addition to the more obvious skills related to the content of mainstreaming per se. If this team composition is not possible, then it is suggested that at least one team member with such skills be recruited.

The railroads in this country have been said to be in trouble today because they assumed that they were in the "train" rather than "transportation" business. They were product oriented rather than consumer oriented. This writer suggests that public education is in trouble today for the same reason. A major task for the technical assistance team, therefore, revolves about the need to help the client systems shift values and become more responsive to changing needs. Again, this goal

can be accomplished only by working with the client systems in such a way that adequate attention is directed at process elements as well as content.

The Philadelphia Project

Although my general comments only touched the surface of the problem of providing technical assistance, I would like to move from the general to the specific, despite the gaps which are inevitable.

Let me start by reporting that the relationship developed between our technical assistance team from the University of Connecticut and the Philadelphia Public Schools can be identified as very close to the client-centered (nondirective) end of the continuum. We decided that our basic role was to provide a support or back-up service. Further, we decided to impose only two requirements on the client system: (a) that they develop a plan commensurate with the general goal of mainstreaming (if indeed such a goal coincided with local objectives); and (b) that we be allowed to monitor their progress. In turn, we would keep our hands off except when we were asked for help. Our conduct in Philadelphia, therefore, was guided by a rather nondirective philosophy.

We took certain precautions which later proved to be very useful, however. We selected on a retainer basis several outside consultants who could provide expertise in a variety of areas and who would also monitor progress. It seemed important to include people who had extensive knowledge as well as those who had a more theoretical orientation: some with specific knowledge of handicapped children and ways of mainstreaming them, and others with expertise in planning techniques, organization development, administration, and similar skills.

It is important to remember that we desired a relationship with our client that was basically nondirective. The client system was encouraged to develop its own plan and hire its own consultants. Our preference was to use our consultants as observers who would gather information to help us design a client-based delivery system that ought to be applicable to comparable situations.

Perhaps at this point, I should state our overall objectives for the Philadelphia project. They were as follows:

1. To help members of the client system (at all levels) to acquire a greater understanding of the concept of mainstreaming.
2. To encourage the client system to establish its own goals for developing a mainstreaming emphasis.
3. To assist the client system in its implementation of its plan (on its terms).
4. To help the client system develop the necessary sub-systems for self-renewal and thereby, to reduce the need for technical assistance.

5. To document the experiences developed from this project so that greater insights into technical assistance delivery systems might result (particularly as related to non-directive types of approaches).

Basically, we approached the Associate Superintendent for Special Education and invited her to submit a proposal to us that would increase the school system's efforts toward mainstreaming in one or more districts if such a goal coincided with local objectives. We also indicated that we would fund costs up to $20,000.

A proposal was submitted to us and, after several meetings, a staff development program was initiated. At the risk of repeating myself, I should emphasize that we were funding their plan. Our only major input to this point was the requirement that the plan be centered about a mainstreaming effort. We brought our consultants in for a meeting with administrators and clarified our proposed use of such personnel; however, we emphasized that the program was theirs (the local school district's) and we encouraged them to hire their own consultants. (Their original proposal included funds for this purpose.) Again, we reiterated our willingness to help them in any way we could.

Basically, the Philadelphia school people felt that what they wanted was the development of selected junior high-school staff members and the subsequent development of a model and plan for the implementation of mainstreaming. Without going into further detail, the following highly subjective observations are reported:

1. The fact that the University of Connecticut and the School District of Philadelphia had no prior experience in working together permitted the project to be conducted unencumbered by past problems and/or unfettered with the need to adhere to established traditions.

2. The "glue" that held the project together at critical times was the high level of trust between both parties.

3. A subjective analysis of our experience to date leads to the realization that the personalities of the persons involved shaped the results of this project more than any other factor.

4. I also become keenly aware of the need for organizational development training for the people involved. Such training directs attention to process as well as product. Perhaps a greater level of skill in process might have resulted in less dependency on personalities.

5. Several agendas were operating in addition to those associated with the objectives. Again, greater sophistication with OD methods would have helped to bring out "garbage" and reduce the "hidden agendas."

6. At different times in the conduct of the project, it was important to involve people at different levels. Early, it was most important to work closely with central administration. Later, it became crucial to be accessible to, and have access to, the district administrators, supervisors,

and classroom teachers. Again, mutual trust at all levels was required to allow movement through these various levels.

7. The bureaucratic procedures imposed upon the conduct of the project need to be reduced to a minimum. It is recognized that a system of checks and balances is important; however, it must also be recognized that rapid responses often are vital to the success of a project and provisions must be made to allow prompt action (with, of course, appropriate justifications after the fact).

8. Ready access to a coordinator in each system seems vital. Both coordinators must be operating at a level sufficiently high to make decisions and slice through red tape when such action is vital to the success of the project.

9. A third party can often play a role essential to the success of the project. He can say the unsayable, take risks that members of the client system might not be willing to take, assist in bringing out "garbage," and keep the group on target.

10. It is important to build in certain safety features in addition to anticipating problems: for instance, the provision of a back-up team of experts who could be used when trouble occurred. This procedure, of course, requires people who have a broad range of competencies and who are versatile enough to cope with the situation.

11. Although a degree of ambiguity (How will the proposed changes affect me and my relationship to my work?) is unavoidable early in the project, it should be reduced as much and as early as possible.

12. As indicated earlier, organizations such as school systems (and universities) are generally ill-equipped to deal with change and conflict; therefore, considerable work needs to be done with developing processes that lead to more effective interpersonal relations within the client system, within the technical assistance system, and between the two.

13. Three major constraints were identified by some members of the client agency as powerful inhibitors of change: insufficient human, physical, and financial resources; the general resistance to change syndrome; and the bureaucratic and contractual rules and regulations.

14. The following series and sequence of activities were offered by some members of the client agency as a viable delivery system:

A. The technical assistance team should first establish contact with central office personnel.

B. The technical assistance team, central office personnel, and district superintendent(s) should then meet and begin planning.

C. A cadre of possible consultants should then be presented to all of the above personnel and made available to each member of the client agency on a personal basis to answer questions and clarify competencies.

D. The client agency people should then plan a program.

E. The technical assistance team would be available to give advice and guidance to the client during such planning.

F. A concurrent organization development program should then be instituted to help the organization respond in a healthy manner to the demands of the project.

G. The technical assistance team should be willing to stand by and help in emergencies.

The list is not complete; however, enough has been included to convey my feelings.

Summary and Proposal

The two basic purposes in presenting this paper were (a) to discuss briefly technical assistance delivery systems in general; and (b) to report some observations on our technical assistance project with a large urban school system.

In an attempt to convey these ideas within the limits of this paper, many important issues necessarily have been omitted. Perhaps a few of the untouched issues might be mentioned to add clarification. For instance, the observations drawn come out of a context that permitted the technical assistance agency to approach client systems and offer free services and a small grant to the client. This situation differs from one in which the client solicits proposals from consulting agencies and expects to pay for such services. Perhaps the context of the technical assistance provided by our project to the Philadelphia Public Schools is more accurately defined as a "linking" function. Time and space does not permit a discussion of the concept of "linking" beyond noting that those disciplines having formal structures that link research and new ideas to practice (i.e., medicine, agriculture) seem to have a better track record with regard to being more responsive to new demands and are generally more able to change rapidly.

Much more thought needs to be devoted to the establishment of formal linking structures in education. It is this observer's opinion that the approach outlined earlier in this paper offers considerable promise and is worthy of exploration. The concept of an intermediate linking agency with the capability of offering both a small amount of seed money and back-up or technical assistance in content and process is a model which this writer feels ought to be seriously considered and evaluated.

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A National Support System for the Preparation of Administrators: The UCEA Model

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University of Texas at Austin

The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) is a national support system designed to help improve the preparation of educational leaders. It is a private, nonprofit organization of major universities in the United States and Canada. The basic mission of UCEA is to improve at both preservice and continuing education levels the professional preparation of administrative personnel in education. These personnel are defined as persons holding leadership positions in schools, colleges, educational agencies in state and federal governments, and public and private organizations that are concerned with advancing the practice and study of education.

The creation of UCEA was proposed in 1954 by members of the Cooperative Program in Educational Administration (Middle Atlantic Region). The planning efforts were supported by a five-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation to Teachers College at Columbia University in 1955. Four years later, the UCEA central office was moved from Teachers College at Columbia to its present location on the campus of Ohio State University, and Dr. Jack Culbertson was appointed Executive Director. A second five-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation, in 1964, in combination with annual payments from the member institutions, permitted the expansion of UCEA's program while the membership was growing. Since 1969, general support for UCEA's operations has come primarily from annual participation fees paid by the member universities, now numbering approximately 50, in the United States and Canada. About 900 professors of educational administration are significantly involved. Member institutions meet specific criteria of excellence in terms of faculty, institution strength, number of graduates, and potential for research and development.

In 1969, discussions were initiated within UCEA to determine ways in which the preparation of regular and special education administrators might be improved through the interface of the two complementary fields of education. The result was the development of the General Special Education Administration Consortium (GSEAC). The Consortium consists of 30 institutions, the majority of which are members of UCEA, who are engaged in the preparation of special education administrators. In the remainder of this paper, there are described (a) the unique characteristics of UCEA as they relate

to ways of involving member professors in the improvement of the field of educational administrators; and (b) the GSEAC model as an illustration of a major effort to develop an effective support system within the larger UCEA context.

The UCEA Program

At a very general level, UCEA provides opportunities for professors and practitioners to benefit the profession through a variety of cooperative activities which are conceptualized, stimulated, coordinated, and facilitated through the organization. These activities are described under the several categories of activities in the rest of this section.

Development

The majority, perhaps, of UCEA activities are developmental in nature. Some of these activities are concentrated on instructional materials for use in pre-and inservice situations: the development of more than 60 written, filmed, and audiotaped case studies; numerous books, monographs, and pamphlets; audiotaped content, including the well-known "best lecture series"; and a range of simulation training materials, including the extensive "Monroe City" series. The latter, using a variety of media to simulate major administrative roles in an urban setting, are designed to assist participants in acquiring useful skills and knowledge for successful administration of the educational enterprise. One of the components of the Monroe City series, the Special Education Administration Simulation (SEASIM), is described in greater detail in a later section of this paper.

Development activities have also included the formulation of conceptual capital in "white papers" or scholarly articles; delineation of new procedures and techniques in administrative practice, and the formulation of recommendations for standards of administrative practice, certification, and training.

Research

Within the context of UCEA, research activities have been undertaken to stimulate theory development, specify manpower needs, articulate the training capabilities of institutions of higher education, investigate the efficacy of new administrative practices, and formulate and test new techniques of training, research methodology, and program evaluation.

Synthesis

Substantial efforts to synthesize knowledge of the field of educational leadership and provide understanding of future implications are a part of UCEA activity.

Dissemination

A major role of UCEA is the dissemination of new ideas and practices bearing upon educational

leadership. UCEA publishes two journals: Educational Administration Abstracts, which abstracts articles relating to educational leadership from more than 90 professional journals; and The Educational Administration Quarterly, a scholarly referred journal containing conceptual and theoretical articles and research reports. The UCEA Review reports organizational activities, prints special papers, and serves as a forum for current and emergent issues in education. Position papers, monographs, reports, and books are also published periodically.

Seminars and Institutes

Associated with dissemination, but also directly connected to continuing education, are the various seminars sponsored by UCEA. For example, Career Development Seminars, each centering on a specific theme, are designed to give professors an opportunity to review emergent ideas in education. Leading authorities are invited to the seminars to present papers that demonstrate new approaches, syntheses, or theories. Attending professors have the opportunity to question and explore the implications of the ideas presented.

Graduate Student Services

Although the majority of UCEA activities are conducted by and large for professors within the network, certain projects and services are directed toward graduate students in the member universities. Recently developed student services include the National Level Internship Program in which a selected group of students is provided with a year's experience in private or government agencies in Washington, D.C. The Computerized Research and Placement Service (CORPS), an intensive computerized data management system, is available through UCEA to facilitate the placement and selection of students into leadership roles. Graduate Student Seminars, similar to the Career Development Seminars for professors, are also part of graduate student activity.

The Unique Structure of UCEA

UCEA employs a small central staff. This condition, plus the set of unique concepts which is peculiar to UCEA, results in program activities and products at a desirable cost/benefit ratio and with significant multiplier effects.

Contributed Efforts

Members and other professors donate their talents, time, energies, and other personal resources to UCEA-sponsored activities which are designed to improve the preparation of educational leadership. In return, the professors receive certain personal and professional rewards: opportunities to test ideas and explore their implications with colleagues, share information, and acquire national exposure. Frequently, the activities result in publications or services which are recognized by the profession and given salary and promotional considerations by universities.

Decentralization

Whenever possible, the responsibility for UCEA activities is undertaken at the local university level. The central staff confines its work to the development and acquisition of resources and support. Through the decentralization of activities, the possibility of the greater involvement of member professors is enhanced; the number of activities which can be carried on within the UCEA network is increased; professors involved in the developmental activities feel a greater sense of pride and accomplishment in assuming responsibility for their involvement; and member professors can more easily tap local resources and direct them toward the accomplishment of the project goals.

Temporary Systems

Many authors have written about the concept of temporary systems. Most have stated that such systems represent one of the most useful and effective vehicles for the accomplishment of tasks in the next decade. UCEA has traditionally used temporary systems. Professors engage in specific project activities; when the project has been carried to its natural conclusion, the team, task force, or commission which was responsible for the activity is disbanded. Temporary systems permit members to become involved in programs as much and for as long as they desire. The concept also allows UCEA to tap the talents of many (a large majority) of its member professors. Because few UCEA structures are institutionalized, the organization is amenable to change. UCEA is, therefore, on the cutting edge of new ideas and practices.

Role as Catalyst

The primary function of the central staff of UCEA is catalytic, that is, to assist member professors in identifying, coordinating, and carrying out individual, group, and intra-university developmental activities. Thus, the UCEA central staff is involved in creating opportunities for the member professors and assisting them in performing their tasks.

UCEA as a Support System

In order to increase the understanding of the dynamics of the UCEA system and its unique structure, there follows a description of the evolution of one program, the General Special Education Administration Consortium (GSEAC), referred to earlier.

GSEAC is composed of some 30 universities that have programs for preparing regular and special education administrators. The mission of this consortium is to stimulate innovations and preparatory programs for regular and special education administrators and to promote the integration of these complementary fields. Since the inception, in 1965, of training programs for special education administration through project grants from the Bureau for Education of the Handicapped, the following three needs for ongoing program success have been articulated:

1. Interinstitutional communication and cooperation with the generic field of educational administration at the training and practitioner levels.
2. Interinstitutional communication and cooperation in the special education administration training program.
3. Support materials to assist in the training of educational leaders.

Stemming from these defined needs was a series of planning conferences that resulted in the creation of the General/Special Education Administration Consortium (GSEAC). GSEAC was conceptualized as a support system to address the described needs of training programs for regular and special education administrators.

During its life, GSEAC used the typical UCEA pattern of development, research, dissemination, synthesis, seminars and institutes, and graduate student services, and benefited from its unique structure of contributed efforts, decentralization, temporary systems, and catalytic functions.

The Special Education Administration Simulation in Monroe City (SEASIM) activity, one product of GSEAC, illustrates clearly and specifically the application of many of the UCEA concepts and procedures. It exemplifies an effort to integrate horizontally research development and dissemination activities for the support of and use to an identified, constituent audience, that is, the persons involved in the inservice and preservice training of educational administrators who are responsible for the education of atypical children.

SEASIM began with a study of special education administrators in large school systems in the nation and the problem areas they faced. After a synthesis of the identified problem areas was completed, the data were reviewed to provide an understanding of emerging problem areas associated with the delivery of special education services. From the analysis and synthesis, the particular and specific components for SEASIM were conceptualized. Regular and special education administration professors and students from eight universities, their colleagues from other university departments, and practicing school administrators formed teams to develop specific components for SEASIM. Component development activities were based on the identified problem areas associated with the delivery of special education services. In order to provide greater horizontal integration, the Monroe City context was used as the framework and background for the development of simulation training materials. Monroe City is the pseudonym of one of the 20 largest urban school districts in the country which has served as the data base for the entire urban simulation efforts of UCEA--"Janus Junior High School," "Wilson Senior High School," "Abraham Lincoln Elementary School," "Superintendency Simulation," "School Psychologist Simulator," and "School Planning Simulator." By using this existing data base, it was possible to reduce the amount of data collection that was needed to form an appropriate base for an extensive simulator of this nature. The development team had only to collect data related to special educaiton within Monroe City as a supplement to the larger data base.

Upon the completion of data collection from special education areas within Monroe City, eight development teams used the data to create simulation materials in a variety of media, such as film strips, audiotapes, 16mm films, and written in-baskets--items that simulate actual system-oriented memos or letters. All the media addressed the specific problem areas in the range of each development team's responsibility. The UCEA central office provided the communication link and resources for input on Monroe City simulation processes and, in general, furnished technical assistance and overall support to the development teams as they pursued the tasks of developing the training materials.

As materials emerged, they were evaluated; first with the team members' students and students of nearby colleges and universities; then, through the opportunities provided by UCEA, with students in different geographic areas. The latter testing was important not only to acquire additional input on changes needed in the materials, but also in order to reduce or remove the subtle regional biases that are inevitable in any developmental activities.

When the initial pilot testing was completed, the materials and their suggested revisions and alternatives were given to a fresh university development team which assumed the responsibility for overall integration, editing, and synthesis into a viable training package. The work of this particular team was crucial; it had to keep in mind constantly that the materials were designed for not only preservice but continuing education experiences, as well, for both regular and special education administrators and other educational leaders.

The final step was the preparation and formulation of revised, edited, and synthesized materials for reproduction and printing; and media components, such as film strips, audiotapes, and 16mm films, were produced. Now the materials moved to a final stage of evaluation or testing, which was accomplished in a series of national conferences. In accord with the principles of decentralization, temporary systems, and horizontal integration, the conferences were hosted by universities and school systems, and the primary responsibility for instruction and presentation within these conferences was provided by various persons who had been involved with the initial developmental work of SEASIM. The purpose of these conferences was not only to disseminate the new and important series of training materials, but to train individuals to use the materials effectively and to obtain evaluative feedback for possible final alterations or revisions. Subsequently, the materials were placed in the UCEA bank of instructional materials to facilitate nationwide and international dissemination.

SEASIM is illustrative of a broad range of GSEAC activities. (The products and activities of GSEAC are listed in the final section of this paper.) Although the specific procedures are somewhat different for the various activities, depending primarily on the projected output and the individual

supplying the talent for the efforts, the development process for SEASIM illustrates how UCEA works as an effective support system to address significant issues and problems that bear upon the training of educational leaders.

It should be pointed out that instructional materials are not the only product of UCEA's support system efforts. Such projects are multivariant; they provide unique and significant professional growth opportunities for professors and other persons involved in the support system activity. In addition, they provide opportunities for professors to express their talents and to be recognized for their abilities in ways that are somewhat different from the recognition obtained from the traditional book or journal article.

Other GSEAC activities have provided products that increase significantly the conceptual capital available to professors and practitioners. For example, a task force of university professors was engaged for approximately a year in defining, describing, and providing illustrative applications of technological forecasting methods. Such methodologies generally have been applied only in business or military areas. The eventual GSEAC product of this effort was a book, Futurism in Education: Methodologies (Henchley & Yates, 1974). This work offers a unique set of tools for the professor and practitioner to understand and prepare for the future.

UCEA Development and Dissemination: An Analysis

In order to explain more fully the specific development and dissemination activities of UCEA and GSEAC and the rationale behind the nature and structure of the UCEA support system, two of Havelock's models are used to describe and analyze the development and dissemination of the SEASIM support materials in greater detail.

Havelock (1973) conceptualized three models of knowledge development, dissemination, and utilization. Each model is valid in its own way, but each represents a different perspective. The models have been labeled as follows:

1. Research, development, and diffusion (R,D,&D).
2. Social interaction.
3. Problem solving.

The first two models--R,D&D and social interaction--are useful for our analysis of the development and dissemination of SEASIM.

R,D&D and the Beginning of SEASIM

The most systematic categorization of processes related to educational innovation was developed by first, Brickell (1961), and later, Clark and Guba (1965). At least five assumptions underlie their orientation:

1. There should be a rational sequence in the evolution and application of an innovation. The sequence should include research, development, and packaging before mass dissemination takes place.

2. There must be planning, usually on a massive scale, over a long time span.

3. There must be a division and coordination of labor to accord with the rational sequence and the planning.

4. There is a more or less passive but rational consumer who will accept and adopt the innovation if it is offered to him in the right place at the right time and in the right form.

5. There will be a high initial developmental cost prior to any dissemination activity. The high cost is accepted by the proponents of this viewpoint who anticipate long-term benefits, efficiency, and quality for the new material and its suitability for mass audience dissemination.

Havelock's (1973) R,D&D model depicted in Figure 1 is useful for explaining the efforts involved in the research/development of the SEASIM simulation package, although it is less useful for describing the SEASIM dissemination effort. At the very heart of the UCEA ethic is the assumption of a rational sequence, planning, and division and coordination of labor. However, the remaining two assumptions (the passive but rational consumer and the high initial cost of development), are tempered by certain circumstances peculiar to UCEA.

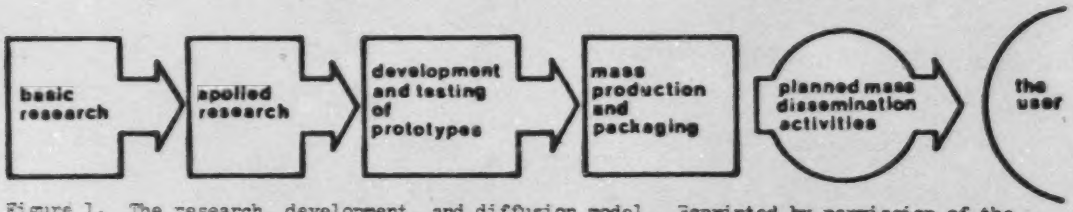

Figure 1. The research, development, and diffusion model. Reprinted by permission of the Institute for Social Research from R. G. Havelock, Training for Change Agents, 1973, p. 13.

The rational developmental sequence of SEASIM included four phases: (a) identifying critical issues in the administration of special education programs in urban school districts; (b) developing background materials requisite to the simulation of the special education director in Monroe City; (c) synthesizing and coordinating the various SEASIM components into a unified and articulated training package.

The first stage of development commenced with a national study that examined the major concerns of special education administrators in the large school districts. This study, conducted by Lampe (1971) of Rutgers University, identified 12 major issues in the area of urban special education administration. They are as follows:

1. Evaluating program effectiveness.

2. Inadequate resources for inservice staff development.

3. Low priority in space allocation.
4. Inadequate resources for program leadership.
5. Shortage of qualified direct-service personnel.
6. Financial support.
7. Provisions for multiple-handicapped children.
8. Identification, classification and segregation of children.
9. Inadequacy of communication among central office, units within the school system, and the public.
10. Special education administration status in organization structure.
11. Inadequacies of relationships between central office special education personnel and local school administrators.
12. Relationships with state education agencies.

The second stage of SEASIM development required that appropriate background materials be obtained from Monroe City to create a data bank based on reality for use in the simulation. Development teams, under the direction of Godfrey Stevens (University of Pittsburgh), conducted site visits to the school district and, on the basis of the Lampe study, gathered such items as student and personnel records and handbooks, budgets, program descriptions, curriculum guides, organization charts, and staff rosters.

The assumption that the user is rational but passive is only partially valid in this particular UCEA effort. The potential user, that is, the professor, is often actively involved in the development and evaluation of the prototype. Such involvement tends to increase awareness, interest, and familiarity with the materials--all proven indicators of potential adoption. Rogers (1962) suggested that low cost is a factor that increases the rate of adoption. By contributing time, talent, and personal resources, the members of the development teams significantly reduce the developmental costs. It is estimated that such contributions reduced the final cost of SEASIM by two-thirds.

The Social Interaction Model and SEASIM Dissemination

Mort and Cornell (1938), in their classic study of educational change, indicated the extreme reluctance of educational organizations to adopt new practices. Brickell (1961) suggested that innovation in education is occurring somewhat more rapidly than the 50-year time span indicated in the original Mort and Cornell studies. However, Brickell's data are primarily a reflection of the reaction to the Russian Sputnik, and there is little evidence that education is changing as rapidly as the "future shock" society demands.

Rogers (1960, 1962) and Rogers and Beal (1957) have suggested that the adoption of innovation comprises five principle stages.

1. Awareness--the point at which an individual is exposed to innovation.
2. Interest--the point at which interest in the innovation is developed and additional information about it is sought.
3. Evaluation--the point at which the individual cognitively accepts the innovation for trial.
4. Trial--the point at which the innovation is used on a small scale.
5. Adoption--the point at which the innovation is placed in full use.

Rogers (1960) also suggested that the following characteristics affect the rate of adoption innovation:

1. Cost--the lower the cost, the more readily adopted.
2. Complexity--the simpler, the more readily adopted.
3. Visibility--the more visible, the more readily adopted.
4. Divisibility--the more easily separated into components, the more readily adopted.
5. Compatibility--the more in agreement with current ideas, the more readily adopted.
6. Utility--the more useful, the more readily adopted.
7. Group Action--the more others must adopt also, the more readily adopted.

Havelock's R,D&D model does not accurately describe the dissemination and adoption activities of UCEA. More descriptive is Havelock's (1973) second model of knowledge utilization, the social interaction model, shown in Figure 2. Advocates of this approach emphasize the patterns in which innovations diffuse through a social system.

Research findings using this model tend to support the following five statements as generally descriptive of the process of innovation diffusion: (a) The individual user or adopter belongs to a network of social relations which largely influences his adoption behavior. (b) His place in the network (centrality, periphery, isolation) is a good predictor of his rate of acceptance of new ideas. (c) Informal personal contact is a vital part of the influence and adoption process. (d) Group membership and reference group identifications are major predictors of individual adoption. (e) The rate of diffusion through a social system follows a predictable S-curve pattern (very slow at the beginning, followed by a period of rapid diffusion, followed in turn by a long late-adoption period).

The bulk of the evidence supporting the social interaction approach comes from rural sociology. However, the five propositions have been found true of a wide range of situations in alternative fields of knowledge with a variety of adopter units, including individuals, business firms, school systems, and states. The types of variables usually considered by the social interactionist, such as characteristics of senders and receivers, social relationships, memberships, leadership, and proximity, are suggested in Figure 2. Different media and message forms have also been analyzed.

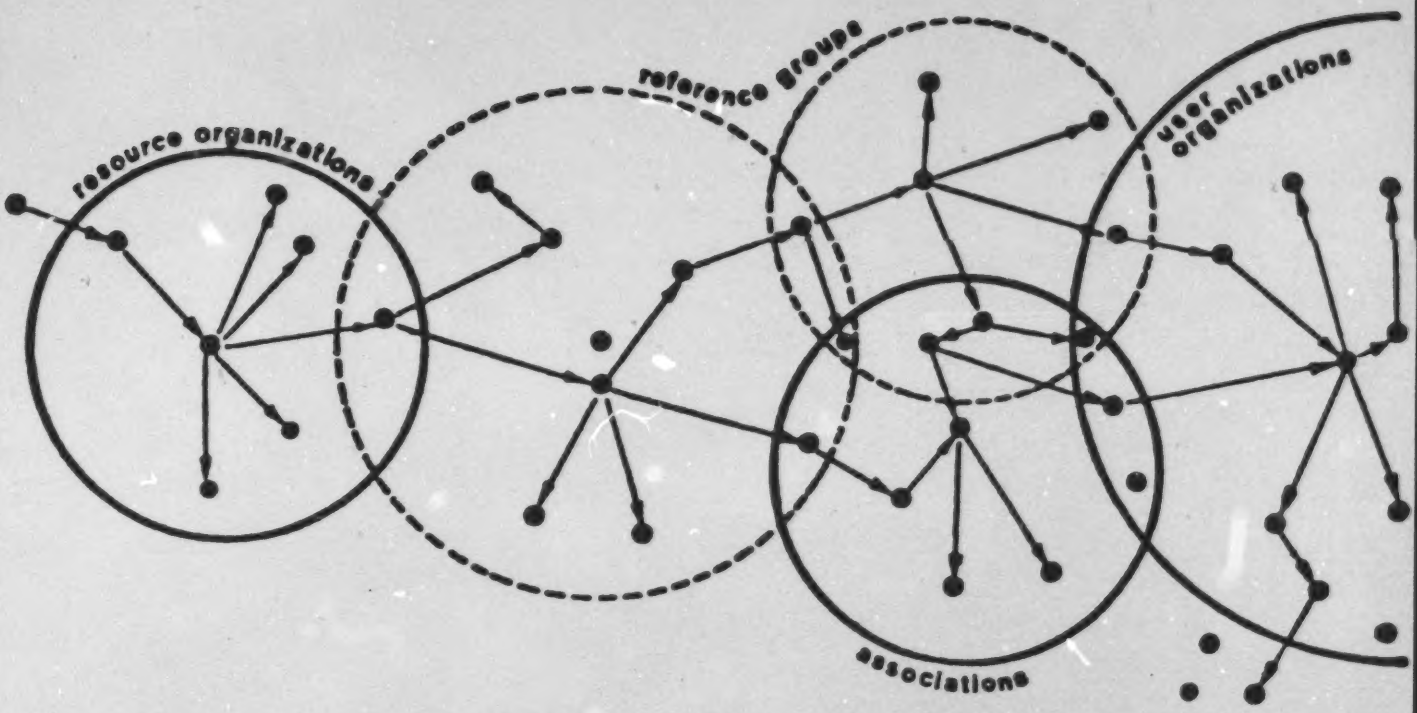

Figure 2. The social interaction model. Reprinted by permission of the Institute for Social Research from R. G. Havelock, Training for Change Agents, 1973, p. 19.

In education, major advocates of the social interaction perspective have been Carlson (1965, Mort (1964), and Ross (1958).

Over the years, UCEA has experimented with a variety of techniques for the dissemination of its instructional materials. Almost 20,000 practicing or prospective administrators from all 50 states, several provinces in Canada, and institutions in Australia have used the Monroe City simulations which have been developed within the last five years. This diffusion effort has been the result mainly of a series of regional institutes organized for the purpose of disseminating the simulation materials shortly after development and production. Typically, the institutes have included a mix of professors, practicing administrators, and significant others within the area involved in the simulation, such as state education agency personnel.

The interchange among participants in these institutes facilitates dialog that brings issues to the fore and creates opportunities for a clear and penetrating examination of the issues. The "hands on" experience with the simulation materials also helps to motivate the participants to adopt the materials. Because the institutes foster a very personalized and meaningful interaction, specific links between trainers and trainees are developed and are often used for both immediate

and longer range follow-up. These follow-ups have the important function of fostering continued understanding of the purpose and use of the materials being disseminated.

The interactions in the institutes increase the motivation of professors to experiment with and/or change their instructional programs for the preparation of educational leaders. Simulation materials are also seen as a vital source of motivation for administrators to learn about and practice the concepts involved in the simulation package.

Such institutes are usually arranged with a university or university/school system serving as host. One advantage of serving as host is that the total staff of the university or school system can be invited to participate in a learning experience without travel costs, registration fees, and other expenses. The sponsor also has an opportunity to invite specific state and local patrons who are served by the sponsoring institution.

A number of benefits accrue to institute participants:

1. An early opportunity to gain information on new materials.
2. An opportunity to explore the purposes and uses of the materials, as they apply to their specific institution.
3. An opportunity to obtain information on the perceptions of other professionals about a set of materials.
4. An opportunity to acquire specific ideas on how materials may be used and acquired.
5. An opportunity to gain ideas on how others would use the materials.
6. An opportunity to assess some of their training efforts.
7. An opportunity to determine whether they would like to participate in training experiences that use the materials.
8. An opportunity to interact with other interested professionals and to establish relationships for the continued exploration of material application.

The developers of material also derive clear benefits from the institutes:

1. To obtain feedback on the materials they have created.
2. To obtain useful ideas relative to future revisions or anticipated uses.
3. To determine areas in which materials development is needed.
4. To develop links with the potential users of the materials.

The dissemination institute embodies all of the major factors within the social-interaction model. In many ways, the entire UCEA network represents the resource organization within the model. The potential user of the materials participates in the institute in a reference group structure that allows him to learn about the materials and to share experiences. The materials developer is afforded the opportunity to gain new insights into his materials, and the potential user gains "hands on"

experience in the use of a new teaching technique. Furthermore, the user has available new resources to assist in determining ways in which the materials may be adapted to his particular circumstances.

The dissemination institute and its inherent social-interaction process lead to all five stages of adoption. Initial exposure to the materials is intended to develop awareness and interest in these new materials; interaction with developers and others at the institute helps each individual to evaluate the materials and identify their uses: actual trial gives individuals an opportunity to experience some of the materials; and personal interactions extending beyond the institute facilitate full adoption of new materials In addition, the entire development and dissemination process is an attempt to satisfy the conditions identified by Rogers as relevant to the adoption rate of innovations.

Summary

In this description of UCEA as a national support system in educational administration, the unique structure and ethic of UCEA have been analyzed to demonstrate ways in which member professors contribute to the production and use of knowledge. The General Special Education Administration Consortium (GSEAC) has been described as a major developmental activity which is directed toward the integration of the complementary fields of regular and special education adminstration. More specifically, the development of the Special Education Administration Simulation in Monroe City (SEASIM) was used to illustrate the development and dissemination process that forms the basis for the UCEA educational support system.

Products and Activities of the General Special Education Administration Consortium (GSEAC)

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
1. Computer-Based Information Retrieval System.	This project tested the efficiency of the information retrieval and the adequacy of the GIPSY data base for educational administration.
2. Task Force to Review and Assess Audiovisual and Gaming Instructional Material.	Audiovisual and gaming instructional materials developed in fields other than education were reviewed and assessed for their applicability to the field of educational administration.
3. Dissemination of Information on Special Education and the Law.	Publications and current legal actions related to special education were summarized and a model class action suit was developed. Five litigation papers were developed. They are entitled as follows: 1. Special Education and Litigation: Implications for Professional and Educational Practice. 2. Exclusion and Rights to Education and Treatment. 3. Alternative Assumptions to Guide Professionals in Educational Practice. 4. Conceptual Project in Child Variance. 5. A Compilation and Review of Litigation Affecting the Handicapped.

4. Experimental Case Development Project.	Cases from the joint perspective of regular and special education administrators were developed and evaluated. Cases developed follows: 1. Special Education - A Racist Institution? 2. Special Education Status in a City School System. 3. David Meets the System. 4. Special Education Placement and the Law.
5. Research Stimulation Project.	Teams of special and regular education administration professors developed papers for the primary purpose of stimulating research in problems of regular/special education.
6. Regional Conferences.	Demonstrations and presentations of GSEAC programs and an evaluation of projects were made by GSEAC participants. Three or four conferences were held during each year of the GSEAC effort.
7. Information Clearinghouse.	Educational Administration Abstracts has a new section for special education literature. The UCEA Review includes articles and other information related to GSEAC and special education. A Disseration Inventory, which includes topics in the field of special education administration, is distributed to GSEAC members.
8. Task Force on Future Trends.	A task force selected a plan for identifying and dealing with future problems and issues that have implications for both regular and special education administration.
9. Monograph on Promising Strategies for Integration of Regular and Special Education Administration.	The monograph reviews relevant literature, describes promising and innovative approaches, and offers recommendations for future efforts toward integration.
10. Tele-lectures for Interinstitutional Communication.	Eight tele-lectures linking different universities were conducted in which "authorities" discussed critical problems and issues that have implications for both regular and special educational administration.
11. Task Force for Development of Interpretive Content Within the Context of URBSIM.	Interpretive content was generated by social and political scientists to provide new insights into the Urban Simulator, "Monroe City."
12. Special Education Component (SEASIM) of Monroe City Urban Simulator.	The Special Education Administration Urban Simulator was developed. It is based on the most critical issues in special education administration.
13. Dissemination of Identified and Assessed Audiovisual Gaming Instructional Materials.	Instructional materials developed in fields other than education, assessed and selected by a task force, were compiled and disseminated
14. Special Education Dissemination Institutes.	A series of nine dissemination institutes was held nationwide for the purpose of providing information and training with regard to the SEASIM training materials.
15. School Psychologist Simulator Component of Monroe City Urban Simulator (PSYCHSIM).	The simulator for the training of school psychologists was developed.
16. School Psychologist Simulator Dissemination Institutes.	A series of nine National Dissemination Institutes to train individuals in the use of the School Psychologist Simulator.

17.	Trend Analysis	A number of scholars conducted a trend analysis of specific trends identified as associated with and having impact upon special education practice and training.
18.	Delphi Probe.	A Delphi study, collecting data from scholars and experts having knowledge pertinent to future special education programs, was conducted.
19.	Task Force for Assessing Technological Forecasting Methods.	Different papers dealing with alternative methods for assessing the future were prepared and published under the title, Futurism in Education: Methodologies.
20.	Training Program Incorporating Futures Content.	A number of scholars are currently exploring ways to incorporate futures content into preparation programs.
21.	Demographic Study of Graduates of Special Education Administration Training Programs.	A systematic study of graduates of special education administration programs was made in order to accumulate data descriptive of training programs and provide information on the graduate's perception of his training.
22.	Internship Study/Project.	The internship as training experience will be described and analyzed.
23.	Graduate Student Seminars.	Two student-organized, -planned and -implemented seminars were conducted during each year.
24.	Working Papers Series.	A series of working papers produced by students and faculty at GSEAC universities was disseminated for the purpose of producing information, reviewing the papers, and testing a mechanism of professional information communication.
25.	Selected Monographs.	A series of monographs was produced dealing with key and current issues in special and regular education administration. Titles include the following: Common and Specialized Learnings, Competencies, and Experiences for Special Education Administrators. New Organizational Patterns and Delivery Systems. Improving Special Education: A Planning Education Manual. Two Theories of Equal Opportunity. Testing, Labeling and Placement. Exclusion and Rights to Education and Treatment. Alternative Assumptions to Guide Professionals in Educational Practice.
26.	Interpretive Content Papers	Several interpretive content papers were developed in order to provide alternative conceptual interpretation on selected issues in regular and special education. Titles include the following: The Organizational Environment of Monroe City School System. Sally. Patterns of Influence: Effect on Educational Decision Making in Monroe City. Community Organization and Decision Making in Monroe City. Changing Power Relationships in Monroe City.

		Problems in Using Economic Data and Concepts Presented in the Monroe City Simulations.
		The Unwanted Pupils.
27.	Audiotapes	Several audiotapes outlining instruction on administrative related issues were developed. Titles include the following:
		A Continuum of Special Education Services.
		Data-Based Implications for Special Education Administration Training Programs.
		Trends in Decentralization.
		Student Classification, Organizational Behavior and Legal Constraints.
		Organizational Development.
28.	Films	Films dealing with the placement and identification process were developed. Titles include,
		"Special Education Placement and the Law";
		"Special Education: The Placement Dilemma"; and
		"The Unwanted Pupils."
29.	Selected Instructional Materials Judged Relevant to Educational Administration	This book surveyed periodicals and other substantive content areas and summarized key instructional materials in the area of regular and special education.

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The SEIMC/RMC and RRC Networks: From Old to New

Don Erickson

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My role in this conference is unique and somewhat curious. On the one hand, I am representing two Networks or support systems which are in the process of going out of business, and on the other I am speaking for two new support systems-- actually extensions of the old--which have not yet come into being. First, I will identify the activities of the "old" SEIMC/RMC and RRC Networks which are relevant to the topic of this conference, and then I will take a quick glance at the anticipated functions of the "new" NCEMMH/ALRC and COORC/RRC Networks as examples of on-going, federally sponsored, national support systems.

Since 1964, a number of related projects have been developed as a result of program decisions and funding from the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (BEH) in the U.S. Office of Education. They have included the Regional Special Education Instructional Materials Centers(SEIMCs), Regional Media Centers for the Deaf (RMCs), Regional Resource Centers (RRCs), the National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped (NCEMMH), The Council for Exceptional Children Information Center, and the Educational Media Distrubution Center (EMDC).

Each of these projects has been responsible for providing resources and supportive services on a state, regional, or national basis to assist special educators in improving the education of exceptional children. Although all have been directed toward this same goal, each project has had a different focus. For example, SEIMCs have been most involved in the area of instructional media and materials; RRCs have dealt primarily with the diagnostic-prescriptive process; RMCs have provided a range of services to persons who work with the hearing impaired; the CEC Information Center has focused primarily on the storage, retrieval, and dissemination of the information related to all aspects of special education; the EMDC has been primarily engaged in the distribution of captioned films for the deaf; and MCEMMH was recently established to focus on a number of related problems, including national coordination for projects related to materials needs assessment and the development, evaluation, and dissemination of

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Although Dr. Erickson made the actual presentation at the conference, much of the material in this paper was written by Dr. A. Edward Blackhurst and is used with his permission. Dr. Blackhurst is the Director of the SEIMC at the University of Kentucky and has recently been appointed Chairman, Department of Special Education, University of Kentucky.

new instructional materials for the handicapped. All together, those various projects deal with most if not all of the various instructional problems which are encountered in the education of exceptional children.

One particular important outgrowth of the SEIMC/RMC Network should be carefully examined in any consideration of support system development. As the SEIMCs developed and delivered their array of teacher-support activities in the late 1960's, it quickly became apparent that the demand for their services far exceeded their capability of supply. Consequently, state educational agencies began to make an investment in the concept and developed their own instructional materials, media, or resource centers. These centers, often called "associate" SEIMCs, were located occasionally in local educational agencies but more often at an intermediate district level, and they gave direct resource support services to teachers in their immediate geographical environs. Many states, using local, state, and federal funds, established intrastate networks of associate SEIMCs and some even hired persons to coordinate the state networks. At the latest count made by my office, over 400 associate SEIMCs covered the entire United States; they represent an annual investment by the states of approximately $20 million or four times the annual federal investment in the Regional SEIMC program.

It is a well-known fact that some difficulties were encountered in attempting to coordinate all of the national/regional projects with each other and with the state developments in order to realize a concerted and total national effort to provide solutions to instructional problems. Among the difficulties were the lack of a sound plan for coordinating project activities, and funding from several sources for the projects, which compounded the coordination problems. In addition, several portions of the country did not have access to some of the projects, and not only were the projects themselves at various stages of development but many had gradually developed differing program emphases.

In response to these problems and to many suggestions from the field during the last one and one-half years, a systematic planning effort was undertaken to eliminate the problems of the past, refocus the efforts of these federally funded programs to make them more responsive to the needs of the field, and develop a more coordinated and systematic approach to responding to these needs. These planning efforts resulted in two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) which were issued on January 11, 1974, by the BEH. The two RFPs established that the United States and its territories would be divided into 13 regions and would be served by two distinct (separate) but coordinated support systems which would be known in the aggregate as the Learning Resource Center (LRC) Program. The LRC Program is designed to capitalize on the best aspects of the earlier individual projects. In general, the major changes that will accrue include (a) nationwide coverage of services; (b) coordinated management of the projects; (c) emphasis on providing services as well as technical assistance; (d) more uniformity among

centers in structure, role, and program interpretation; and (e) the sharing of some common services and a better definition of the division of labor among the projects.

Based on an analysis of the RFPs and discussions with appropriate federal program officers, the major components of the new support systems can be identified and their primary activities described.

Each region will be served by a Regional Resource Center (RRC) which will place primary emphasis on the educational diagnostic and prescriptive process. A portion of these projects will be assigned to working directly with specific children; other efforts will be devoted to working with the states to develop and refine the intrastate capacity for individual child assessment and prescription. Assistance will be provided also to enable schools to implement the educational prescriptions.

Each region also will be served by an Area Learning Resource Center (ALRC). In general, the ALRCs will work closely with state and local educational agencies to plan services related to their needs. The following foci will be included:

1. Stimulation, development, and technical assistance to projects, such as local media centers, which provide materials to teachers.
2. Consultation, demonstration, dissemination, and training on the use of instructional materials.
3. Access to national information storage, retrieval, and delivery systems.
4. Identification of needs for training in the use of instructional materials.
5. Consultation, location, and training in the use of teacher-training materials.
6. Design of new teacher-training materials on the use of instructional media.

Three national specialty centers to serve ALRC programs will be developed for (a) the Visually Impaired, (b) the Hearing Impaired, and (c) Other Handicapping Conditions. These centers will locate and develop new materials and enter information about the materials into the national information system.

The fourth specialty center will be a depository for child-use and teacher-training-use materials. Those materials tested and accepted by the ALRC program will be entered into this depository and made available for loan nationally through the regional centers.

The RRCs will be coordinated by a national office that will develop procedures for sharing resources, communications, joint planning, management, and procedures coordination. In addition, this office will conduct needs assessment and training related to educational assessment prescription.

The national coordinating office for the ALRCs will be operated by NCEMMH. This office will perform functions similar to those of the office for RRCs. In addition, NCEMMH will coordinate a national needs assessment for child-use instructional materials and operate a national instructional materials information storage and retrieval system which will be accessible through the regional ALRCs. The two national coordinating offices will work together to insure the coordination of ALRC and RRC services into the LRC Program.

We heard described at the conference the support activities of many different "systems" — TADS, DDTA, several LTIs, SEIMCs and RMCs, RRCs and ALRCs, and CORRC and NCEMMH. If all of these initials sound confusing to us, think how cacophonous they must be to the people who are the recipients of our support! The problems of coordination among and between support systems are many and complex. But solutions to the problems are essential if handicapped and gifted children are to be adequately and responsibly educated.

Consumer Reaction

Henry J. Bertness

Tacoma (Washington) Public Schools

As a school administrator working in a local school district, I was delighted to participate in a conference on national support systems in special education. I would like to encourage persons in leadership roles in technical assistance to have more interactions with school administrators, their associates, and the people whom they seek to represent. Be naive, if you must, and assume that a school administrator is a change agent, that he occupies a position of power, and that he does his best to negotiate and create in discreet and professional ways. Accept the idea naively, if you must, because it can be very helpful to you whenever you want to help effect some change in a local school district. We want technical assistance experts to come to us in school districts and to help us, but in a relationship that can be characterized as colleagueship. We have something to offer you in return.

Your ultimate validity, like that of colleges of education, rests on what happens to the children in our schools. Most of the children in this country are found during the week in the public school systems. Colleges of education also should be aware of this fact and they should not abdicate their role, as some of them do, with the production of their product--a graduate with a teaching certificate. Such a limited attitude assumes that the product is finished and nothing more is needed. Yet, in school districts, as we all know, continuing education, continuing support, and support systems of various kinds are necessary.

A great deal was said at the conference about models. I can accept the necessity of getting plans down on paper but I cannot accept the development of a fanaticism about models. I would like to suggest that models be treated with a generous dose of humor because a perfect one has not yet and probably never will be devised. I am reminded of Ruth Martinson's work in California and her three-year study of the education of gifted children. As I recall, she and her colleagues had about 21-22 approaches, of which one was a ringer--a placebo--and did nothing. The analysis of the results of the study showed no significant differences among the various active approaches; a significant difference was found between the active approaches and the placebo, however. Although I may be generalizing too much, I see the moral of her work as paralleling a principle of medicine: "Above all,

do something but don't hurt the patient."

During the conference, I had the feeling that technical assistance people are not accustomed to coming together and exchanging information on what they are doing in and for the schools. The question that arose in my mind, consequently, is, "Where have you been?" That is, why do you not know what your colleagues are doing? I would like to see you getting together more often in the future and including participants who were not well represented at this conference: people from general as well as special education; curriculum and development people; and superintendents who, although they are often regarded as caretakers, see themselves as movers or effecters of change for the better. I would like to encourage support systems people to meet with school administrators whenever possible because they are interested in what you are doing and they need you.

Support systems people ought to be involved in the Big Six--the major organizations of school personnel--such as the national associations of school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and state officers. I have not been to all of the Big Six meetings but I have not heard people who have attended any of them come back and say that they have had a message about handicapped children, support systems, or technical assistance. Yet, they need to hear because they are the natural users of your services.

In trying to communicate with national groups, we are often guilty of some cardinal sins. One is overreaching, that is, hitting an organization such as the American Association of School Administrators with one blockbuster and hoping that the message has gotten through. One-time shots are not helpful. What would be far more effective is a systematic approach in which cumulative gains can be made over a period of years. We also tend to inflate our claims when we get a chance to communicate with the big organizations or school administrators, perhaps out of a desperate desire to be listened to. Yet, as we all know, unrealistic claims tend to lull the listener into inactivity.

Although law and policy do not produce anything in and of themselves, they can be very effective allies of change efforts. One of the recurring problems in public education is that if someone comes up with a batch of evidence that seems to indicate that change along certain lines is desirable, someone else can always disagree with the interpretation of the data. However, if you have the law behind you (assuming that the law is supported by evidence and is not capricious) and the support of school policy, your hand is strengthened.

During the presentations of leadership training institute activities, someone said, "A school district is not a viable host for an LTI-type project." A little later, someone else referred to one of the projects for handicapped children as "nonviable." I am becoming a little bit impatient with the word viable; I think I know what it means although I do not know what a nonviable project is. I assume that if a project is ill-conceived or ill-managed it may be described as nonviable. Yet, out

of our experience with the LTI project advocacy system, I think that we have seen the possibility of providing help even under the worst of conditions and in the worst of situations. After all, the children are there, and if you can help the project along even a little bit by providing them with services, you are doing something worthwhile. If I have confused the terms "viable" and "worthwhile," perhaps it is because I consider the latter to be a better word for the vocabularies of support systems. It is tempting for research, development, and leadership efforts to become self-serving, that is, to be more concerned with projects that are viable rather than worthwhile, but in terms of ultimate products, we should judge projects by what they are doing for children and youth. The consumers of support systems are many but the purpose of providing support systems to consumers is to benefit the children.

At the risk of repeating the tenor of Dean McCarty's comments, I want to wind up with some remarks on trust. If you work with public school systems, there must be some understanding that a public school system deals with small gains. School districts deal with incremental gains over long periods of time, and that is how we make most of our headway. I have heard that persons joining federal agencies have an average tenure of about 2 1/2 years. It is very hard to accomplish much in such a short time period. In a public school system, my feeling is that it is very difficult to create, implement, and sustain change in less than 6-10 years. I do not consider that to be a dismal picture; rather, I consider it a challenge. When someone comes into the public school system and assumes that one grand, dramatic effort will save the day, I find the assumption insulting. In that same school district, there may be many dedicated people who are working their hearts out trying to stay with consistent incremental gains and to keep change efforts going in the right direction for those gains.

Educators, in general, are divided between two worlds which meet at times, and those are happy times, but usually the worlds are separate and apart. One world is that of the university professor who is committed to "truth" or "perfection." He likes to find the best way of doing things and he insists on trying to find new knowledge. This world merits considerable respect. The world of the public school, on the other hand, is the world of imperfection. We try our best to move something from its present status to one that is just a little bit more effective, just a little closer to truth. It is insulting, then, to have a visitor take a look at what is going on and ask why we are not doing something else, although that something else may be currently way out of our reach. The assumption is that we have had the ability but not the wisdom or courage to identify and implement a proper goal.

Try to understand a school system at least a little bit. Try to get inside the context of the people with whom you are dealing before you go on. Listen to the people in that system. When you

come to me and say, "I'd like to help you," or I invite you to talk with me, I very much appreciate your attending to how I perceive the problem that is facing me. I would be very disappointed if you did not share your perception of the problem with me, even if you have to say, "You're in the wrong part of the ball field; the action about which you should be worried is right over here." Now, if you are not able or I do not allow you the opportunity to reveal your thoughts, we are preventing the establishment of trust.

As others have said, trust takes time. Even in a meeting such as the conference on national support systems, the meaningful discussions tend to occur toward the end of a two-day session or in the middle of a three-day session, after people have become a little bit acquainted. I have started to respect three-day sessions simply because they give the participants the time to loosen up and trust each other enough for straight talk. In this sense, time is essential for trust.

National Support Systems in the Sociological Context

Donald J. McCarty

University of Wisconsin

National support systems in education are complex undertakings in which the probability of instant success is problematic. This seemingly harsh judgment is not meant to argue against the real necessity for such enterprises; rather, the intent is to stress that the idea of seeking help from outsiders is no longer as popular among educationists and their constituents as it once was. Moreover, there are significant barriers to overcome if any national support system is to be operationally successful.

The greatest ideological barrier is sheer disillusionment. The public doubts that more formal education is the logical response to every social and economic problem. Researchers like James Coleman and Christopher Jencks have reached discouraging conclusions about the efficacy of education, primarily because their methodologies are not precise enough to measure the effect of schooling on the single individual. Since their research reports rely on mass testing of different groups of individuals, the accuracy of the conclusions may rightfully be questioned because of the number of conceivable contaminating variables. The point is that their basic message has penetrated beyond the scholarly councils into the public mind. No matter that both Coleman and Jencks are political liberals who want to increase educational opportunities or that they recognize and admit deficiencies in their work.

Too much discussion about education is nothing more nor less than individuals talking by each other because their starting points are different. If a person accepts the Shockley view that blacks are genetically less intelligent than whites, there is no point in suggesting to him that massive compensatory programs will alter the fact. Neither is the follower of behavior modification likely to see extensive counseling therapy as useful in treating the alcoholic.

The results of this loss of faith in education have been devastating. It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain federal funds for long-term basic research; instead, problem oriented applied research is in vogue. The very existence of the National Institute of Education is in jeopardy. Even private foundations formerly partial to educational ventures have begun to shun them. The leisure of the theory class may be coming to an end; the malaise is serious and shows no signs

of early abatement. A major crisis of this magnitude inevitably exacerbates tensions which were contained more or less successfully during the recent past when funds were easily obtainable for a variety of educational ventures.

The greatest organizational barriers are the cultural and system attributes that presently characterize the educational system. A brief review of these factors may be in order.

Sooner or later, if a technical assistance program is to meet its objectives, it must relate to a consumer. Most consumers in education at this stage in history are wary of projects emanating from the federal government. Immediate past experience with these attempted affiliations has usually been unsatisfactory. The planners in Washington start with prescribed goals then change or redefine them; supervision is erratic and the program officers keep changing; and federal staff members are frequently young and inexperienced, and interpersonal relationships are heirarchically based rather than peer oriented. No doubt the federal planners sometimes see the consumer as resistant to change, sycophantic, and even devious in intent. Put in more elegant language, we are referring to the sociological observation that agents of change from outside the school culture are too frequently ignorant of the culture in which the change is to be made; if, by chance, they understand the culture, they are themselves victims of that very fact.

Technical assistance efforts in a field as cognitively complex as special education require specialized knowledge of the kind generated in our better colleges and universities. The typical role definition for professors with these scarce skills does not include the need for training in how to demonstrate the application of their knowledge to day-to-day problems in real school situations. The current reward system reinforces the publish or perish (and publish only certain types of work) ethic, providing no major incentive for these knowledge producers to break the expected pattern. Higher education is not geared to respond to requests for proposals which are highly prescriptive, hence private enterprise is corralling this arena, particularly in large-scale evaluative operations in which computer technology dominates. These latter agencies are client oriented but, for the most part, are not organized to produce knowledge.

Public school teachers and administrators have seen many innovations come and go. They know that the federal influence in education is responsive to political realities and that today's preferences may be liabilities tomorrow. Too many times they have embarked on a new venture sponsored in Washington only to find the support withdrawn at crucial stages. They will still react positively but, in too many cases, with a cynic's sense of déjà vu.

Powerlessness has been the lot of most educational interest groups. School boards, teachers, administrators, college professors, and the like have attempted to fill the vacuum by developing national coalitions in order to consolidate power. Among the most viable are the American Association

of School Administrators, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National School Boards Association, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the Education Commission of the States. These coalitions helped bring about state control of over 85 percent of Title III funds. It was this decision that revitalized many state departments of education, which were often viewed as havens staffed by mediocrities content with minor regulatory duties. Now, many state departments of education have quality personnel capable of giving technical assistance to local school systems. In fact, they are gaining hegemony over colleges of education, which have yet to form a strong, national coalition. Changes in the professional curricula in teacher education are being mounted from state departments through the route of certification mandates. Given the uncertainty in the educational scene, it is not yet clear what role these coalitions are likely to play, but the probability is that they will continue to lobby for their self-interests and so reduce the options open to federal initiative.

In sum, no single national coalition represents education as a discipline. We have no counterpart to the American Medical Association. Whenever a controversial issue involving education reaches crisis proportions, the issue is usually resolved politically. For example, special education services for handicapped children is a popular idea and the concept of mainstreaming is appealing; it seems likely that the federal government will continue to fund such programs generously. On the other hand, basic research has many detractors in and out of the educational establishment and its prognosis is much less healthy. What is needed, of course, is a real national coalition of all the diverse educational pressure groups so that a common front may be presented to legislators. Unfortunately, this coalition is not likely to happen and the principle of divide and conquer will continue to apply.

The professional who would provide technical assistance must recognize that the setting in which he finds himself will severely constrict his range of activities and capacity to act unless he fully understands how the system functions. The interloper may be seen as a distinct threat to the supposed clients and, if he violates the organization's sacred norms, his consultative services may be rejected outright. Let us examine two different ongoing educational support systems to see if this point has practical relevance.

The UCEA Model

The University Council for Educational Administration is an organization responsive to the needs of the departments of educational administration in a number of the major universities in the United States and Canada. Membership is open on an application basis if certain standards are met and dues of $2,500 a year are paid. These stipulations tend to eliminate the marginal institutions. The UCEA has also received grants from foundations and the federal government. It is housed at Ohio State

University. Working with a small professional staff and a limited budget, UCEA has had to rely on the cooperation of its member institutions to make progress. The fact that the members continue to support the organization is ample testimony to its achievements.

My analysis of this support system does not dwell on the activities pursued by UCEA but on its structural arrangements. Leadership has been provided by an executive director who has been with the organization since its inception. Other professional staff have been short termers remaining with UCEA for a few years and moving on to other assignments, frequently in member institutions.

The central staff provides stimulation to its field affiliates but the glue that has kept interest high has been the joint collaborative efforts fostered by the voluntary nature of the network. The director personally visits most of the institutions annually or sees their representatives at one of the many scheduled work conferences. These interactions increase trust and influence faculty members in each institution to contribute more willingly their time and effort to major projects of the parent organization. Each faculty member in a UCEA university is asked to spell out his intellectual interests and he is invited to participate with others of like mind in cooperative undertakings. Thus, UCEA was able to identify 30 institutions preparing or interested in the preparation of special education administrators. It goes without saying that more can be accomplished in this way than if each institution were to proceed separately.

UCEA is a support system well worth examining closely. It does not have a gigantic budget, it is not overstaffed at the top, it has learned to decentralize and coordinate its programing, and it listens to its membership. Lacking funds to buy cooperation--in fact it is almost totally dependent on its membership--it has met its goals remarkably well. Is there a lesson to be learned here?

The executive director, a former professor of educational administration of high standing, knew reasonably well how units operated in most institutions. He was able to adjust his planning mechanisms to capitalize on the strengths of each institution without exposing its weaknesses. Through formal structures (a board of directors and meetings of institutional representatives) and informal exchanges, each institution realized that it was a full partner in the cooperative venture. Unity of purpose was achieved and energy was spent on collaborative activities rather than in competitive struggles.

The Teacher Corps

The Teacher Corps, in its initial stages, was an attempt by the federal government to improve the educational opportunities of disadvantaged children by selecting individuals with unconventional backgrounds (e.g., college graduates in the liberal arts, members of minority groups) and training them to serve as intern change agents in the public schools. Federal guidelines established the broad outlines of the program and grants were made on a roughly proportional geographic formula to

colleges that applied and met the criteria established by the Teacher Corps administrative hierarchy. Grants tended to be short term, of modest amounts, and they were intentionally awarded to institutions of middle rank on the academic prestige ladder.

Ronald Corwin's study, supported by the Ford Foundation and the National Education Association, chronicles the impact of key aspects of the Teacher Corps program on these intern change agents, the participating colleges, and the cooperating public schools (Corwin, 1973). No attempt was made in this study to assess whether interventions by the interns directly affected the learning outcomes of students in classrooms. The decision was made to adopt a multifaceted research approach firmly grounded in organization theory from the sociological perspective; emphasis, therefore, is more on the structural features of organizational life than the personality characteristics of participants.

Ten separate Teacher Corps programs and 42 cooperating schools comprised the sample. These sites were studied intensively over a two-year period. Large-scale, survey-analysis techniques were combined with case-study analyses. Questionnaires designed to provide attitude scales and indices for a wide range of interesting variables were distributed to all interns, the principals and all regular classroom teachers in each cooperating school, university program directors, school system coordinators, university faculty members associated with the program, and comparable groups of graduate students in education at each college who were not in the Teacher Corps. Variables included attitudes toward racial integration, initiative and compliance scales, professional role orientations, pupil control ideologies, indices of alienation and liberation, organizational change measures, perceived changes in college curriculums, and the like. Interview teams were dispatched to each research site and approximately two-thirds of the questionnaire respondents were also interviewed. Data were analyzed with multivariate statistical techniques.

Did this natural field experiment work? As one might imagine, the answer is equivocal. Teacher Corps had lofty ambitions; it wanted reform in the educational establishment and it hoped to attack the structural rigidities by championing a new breed of teacher, the idealistic liberal arts graduate.

Corwin's well-measured analysis points out that the structural features in the organization of the public schools are sufficiently deep rooted to be difficult to alter. The public schools see the interns not as change agents but as student teachers who can help out with the daily routines. Many of the interns become disenchanted when their leadership attempts are rejected and they become radicalized, socialized to the system, or defeated. The colleges do not have either the financial or intellectual resources to overcome the powerful influence of the local schools which, in the final analysis, control what takes place in the supposedly experimental schools.

There were modest successes, of course. Some education professors, under the relentless prodding of the interns, improved their instruction; and in rural areas a number of technological inno-

vations were introduced. Moreover, many of these interns graduated and decided to teach in disadvantaged schools. That is about it.

Corwin's conclusions have face validity for those of us who dabble with federal projects: the endless frustrations endured by Teacher Corps participants in their efforts to work with ever-changing guidelines and a parade of new faces in decision-making slots squares with reality. His suggested strategy to overcome the lethargy of educational bureaucracies is to establish competitive, privately run organizations. This idea is not new nor is it without its critics; notwithstanding, his book illuminates how difficult it is to make changes in a highly structured institution like a public school system.

These two support systems--UCEA and Teacher Corps--are radically different. UCEA relates to a highly sophisticated clientele--professors of educational administration in prestigious universities. On the other hand, Teacher Corps sought out ordinary collegiate institutions, in the belief that they were more likely to charge their patterned ways, and it used student interns as change agents. UCEA developed an integrated support system; the Teacher Corps foundered on its own indecisiveness and dismayed almost all its reference groups. Essentially, Teacher Corps never built a viable technical assistance plan.

Organizational Principles for National Support Systems

Before commenting on a topic of this magnitude, some sharp delimitations have to be drawn. A total support system and all its constituent parts cannot be treated comprehensively in a short essay. What follows, then, are suggestions derived from organizational theory which may be worthy of consideration by individuals engaged in technical assistance.

The thrust of the argument presented so far is that obstacles to change inhere far less in the characteristics of individuals than in cultural and systemic characteristics. UCEA was used as an example of a national support system that took this point of view into account; the Teacher Corps was introduced primarily to indicate what happens when emphasis is placed on selecting individuals with change-agent skills and they are expected to cope with any environment. Mention was made of a number of groups in the evolving national educational culture that may have a substantive impact on efforts to provide technical assistance in the future. For example, Title IX regulations issued by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare prescribing equal access for men and women to facilities, equipment, coaches, money, and the like in physical education revises the school culture instantaneously. It would take years to accomplish this change by the alternatives normally open to a support system.

Briefly, consider the micro-aspects of support systems. Simply put, what techniques are appropriate for servicing the client? Gallagher's description of his approach in North Carolina is hard

to fault. Developing a needs assessment, using experts as consultants, maintaining long-term working relationships, offering free service, and developing trust through authentic behavior are guidelines which any prospective technical assistance system should find useful. Putting the final agreements about mutual responsibilities in written form is a particularly good administrative device.

Let us take this plan and apply it to a hypothetical situation. Suppose the client, a school system, has asked for some technical assistance in preparing regular classroom teachers for mainstreaming. The needs assessment shows that many of these teachers have jaundiced ideas about handicapped children which are reflected in their teaching behaviors. Gradually, an inservice program is established with expert help and the corrective program is launched. Immediately, the consultants face all the "real" problems which educators lament. Footdragging, open hostility, and grudging cooperation are evidenced among the staff. If the consultant carries his client through these perilous times he will likely engender trust. It should be obvious that services of this intensity are expensive and that not many school systems can be handled by one consultant. The Gallagher model is a superb one but its thoroughness means that the support system must restrict itself to a limited number of clients.

This conclusion argues for a fair number of national support systems operating independently but interlocked in some kind of coordinated network. Small independent systems find it easier to experiment than large bureaucracies and, since clients have different needs and treatment preferences, a number of support systems working in close concert and espousing contrasting ideas and approaches could mutually reinforce each other.

More pointedly, clients resent the arrogance and ignorance of reality frequently displayed by consultants who have not learned the territory. The entrepreneur who has developed a neatly packaged "dog and pony show" and uses the same script, whatever the occasion, is familiar to us all. He is usually entertaining but the application of his remarks to the client's concerns may be difficult to decipher. Superior knowledge is not enough; the sanitary engineer who knows all about the technical aspects of sewers may find that his real problem in building a new sewer system in a community is the resistance of a few families who like things the way they are. Technical assistance is always involved in human problems. No wonder that it seems that the more things change the more they remain the same! Human organisms have invented innumerable ways to revert to patterned ways once the flurry of excitement engendered by an innovation has petered out.

<u>The ideal is to make the client-consultant arrangement collegial rather than adversarial</u>. An adversarial context causes the parties involved to place a higher value on winning for the sake of winning; in the process, educational objectives become the loser. What is referred to here is the personal integrity of the two parties in question. There are, without any reasonable doubt, consul-

tants who value fame and fortune more than the welfare of the client; likewise, there are clients who see technical assistance as another means of dipping into the public treasury. Commitment is the necessary ingredient; without it, we observe the kind of incestuous relationship (I will consult for your project and, in turn, I will invite you to consult for me) which has given technical assistance a bad name in some quarters.

In the end, then, personality makes a difference; personal identity is, in part, defined by one's culture, traditions, and ethnocentricity. For example, Gerald Ford's administrative style may be different from Richard Nixon's but he is surrounded by the same environmental presses and constricting parameters. Still, if any consultant were to wait for full understanding of the social and political setting he confronts or for definitive research findings to guide him, little would be accomplished. The absence of sure-fire strategies and guarantees of successful outcomes is a constant that probably will be with us always. At the micro-level, the support system looks at the situation and does the best it can with the tools at hand, limited as they may be. In short, technical assistance is still an art form even though it may be dispensing scientific information.

Over time, we have developed reasonably satisfactory techniques for helping a client in the face-to-face type of relationship. The formal literature in this arena is plentiful and workshops and conferences offering training in the consultative skills are abundantly available. Although there are ideological scuffles about techniques, these stresses pale into insignificance when macro-level issues are introduced.

This circumstance is entirely logical. Looking at an entire system is a mindboggling intellectual task which, in an educational enterprise, forces an examination of the goals of education and a clarification of areas of responsibility. Elements of uncertainty abound; planning for the future is much more frightening than undertaking the hard labor of attempting to solve a targeted practical problem.

Our analysis of macro-level systems may benefit from an examination of large-city school systems. These units are capable of exercising considerable political power and they interact frequently with the many national coalition groups who have not developed a unified institutional core to speak for education. Moreover, state departments of education see the large cities as sui generis and they treat them more gingerly than the typical school community. Mayor Daley of Chicago proved on at least one occasion that even the federal government should not attempt to withhold funds from that city. Large-city school systems operate within the framework of those sources of power or symbols of legitimacy that impinge on their communities. It is not the educator who ultimately holds power but the politician.

Research studies have verified that several different typologies of community-influence systems

exist, and they indicate that communities may often be characterized as in transition from one type to another (McCarty & Ramsey, 1971). Power, of course, is elusive and difficult to describe and verify empirically.

Fortunately, cities and their decision-making centers can be systematically categorized along a continuum. Sociological literature is partial to a type of power structure called the "elite power model." This concept holds that the power structure in a city is pyramidal, with a few men or even one man at the top. The decisive decision-making group is likely to be the economic elite, although dominance may also derive from religion, ethnicity, political party, race, or whatever. This phenomenon is often referred to as the conspiracy theory of politics.

The point to remember is that the elite power model does not allow for conflict between sides of relatively even strength. If the elite group desires to exercise power in a particular instance its control becomes absolute. For example, the owners of the major industry in a city of this type are not too likely to have their dominance threatened; if their decision-making power is challenged effectively, the city is no longer dominated by a single elite, by definition.

In some cities, at least two durable factions compete for control over important decisions. Here are found not only relatively even sides but also clear manifestations of power within each faction similar to those in the single, elite power model. These factions tend to coalesce around natural rallying points such as religion, politics, occupation (as in town vs gown), and economic philosophy.

Some cities follow neither the elite nor the factional power model. Rather, the power structure is pluralistic, or diffused, with many poles of power. Theoretically, no single power structure need be reckoned with in any situation. Leadership varies with issues. Power and community interests exist, but power is contestable and not overwhelming.

A fourth type of power structure is theoretically possible. This residual type reveals no active power structure. Power is basically inert or, more properly, latent, and it resembles a sort of domination by the status quo. In such an environment radical experimentation is not likely to occur.

Walton (1966), after reviewing a number of research studies in the community power field, identified the following four typologies:

1. Pyramidal (a monolithic, monopolistic, or single cohesive leadership group).
2. Factional (at least two durable factions that compete for advantage).
3. Ccalitional (leadership varies with issues and is made up of fluid coalitions of interested persons and groups).
4. Amorphous (the absence of any persistent pattern of leadership or power exercised on the local level).

In sum, cities are not idiosyncratic at all; instead, they fall into readily identifiable patterns. Cities are, however, dynamic; as environmental conditions change, decision-making structures will eventually respond to these demands, perhaps too slowly for many of their constituents. This fact accounts for much of the conflict we frequently observe.

City school systems, subject as they are to community political environments, are geared to local political demands. If and when such external forces wish to modify course content, the framing and execution of long-range plans, and the like, they must attempt to influence school boards and superintendents of schools directly or indirectly. As one might expect, overt demonstrations of power influence are rare. More sophisticated techniques in opinion management are usually employed.

Is a support system and its staff able to perform its role independently or is it influenced by the environmental strictures outlined? As in the old and unsettled argument about the primacy of environment or heredity in determining intelligence, much can be said for environmental pressures overcoming the psychological and professional preferences of consultants. By their very nature, school systems are political institutions, and it is not unreasonable to expect consultants to reconcile themselves to the realities of political life. Compromise is what ordinarily happens.

For example, in the fractional city the superintendent of schools must work with the majority, but since majorities often change in such communities, he must be careful not to become identified too closely with one faction. In other words, he must be a political strategist. He takes his direction from the faction exercising power at any particular time, but he behaves in such a way that he also can work effectively with an opposing group when the power balance shifts. He does not recommend one course of action as the best, to the exclusion of all others. Rather than taking a strong stand on controversial issues, he follows a middle course, which allows him room for retreat. He is not an active supporter of any particular group in the board. What is crucial is compatability. The style and temperament of a consultant must be congruent with the character and needs of an organization at a particular time.

For the foreseeable future, moreover, cities will remain a powerful political force. They have been resilient enough to ward off the effects of most externally imposed strictures on their freedoms, by such Machiavellian mechanisms as failing to comply in toto with promulgated regulations, refusing help outright, interpreting statutes to fit local preferences, using delaying tactics, and the like.

Although my foregoing observations may indicate that we may have been doing our job badly in the cities, there is no doubt that we have a job to do. Our drive toward equality of social outcomes is in its infancy. National support systems are needed and they should not be totally beholden to the federal government. A degree of independence is essential in order that alternative ideas may be considered. Federal officials in the educational bureaucracy do not occupy roles calculated to

give them either a just perception of issues or a leverage on the facts; they need the correctives of broader learning and more cosmopolitan sympathies associated with those who labor in the field.

My purpose has been to alert professionals engaged in national support enterprises to the pervasiveness of the rules, traditions, and expectations in the organizational cultures they hope to liberate. This knowledge is an irreplaceable condition for self-awareness and, therefore, for the development of viable programs that are something more than the expressions of the prejudices of a given set of factors. Knowing how to overcome these cultural factors without surrendering to provincialism or faddism is an indispensable tool for the imaginative person devoted to technical assistance.

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Support Systems in Special Education

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Consider all the new services the United States has tried to institute since 1960: education of all kinds, public health, mental health, welfare programs, and even foreign aid. Many developers of such services complained that the federal government funded them for only a year at a time; consequently, the institutions could not plan their activities over a long enough period to make great changes in the professions. Since this complaint arises because each institution sees itself as an individual with a birth, growth, and death, it must worry about dying every year. In the past, individuals have attempted to gain immortality by participating in the growth of an eternal family, profession, or nation. Thes institutions were a one-step higher organism than the individual. But, like individuals, these institutions are all too mortal. For the predictabilities possible only in long life, we must look at social organisms of a higher order than mere professions or schools, or, perhaps, even nations.

Suppose, however, that the Leadership Training Institute, as an example, saw itself as a member of a group of ever-changing institutions that included among its members the federal government and the many professions related to education. Then, as the unpredictable "future shock" needs of our society kept sprouting up, the group of institutions could keep current with the rapid changes, but no one institution would have to maintain the same character for very long. Thus we could expect the individual Leadership Training Institute to die out, but other sorts of institutions would take its place, and growth would continue in the community of education, eventually, perhaps to become a planet-wide community.

Many social forces are changing education and forcing further development of educational support systems. For instance, the current decrease in the birth rate will result in fewer jobs in traditional education. Machine teaching and milieu teaching will further decrease traditional teaching jobs. As women's liberation gets under way, however, teaching can do a wonderful job at keeping small children out of their mothers' hair. It can also keep the increasing numbers of octogenarians busier, happier, and more lively in their thoughts than nursing homes ever could. As machines take over more production and service, remedial and continuing education become a safe way to keep adults off the labor market. Education is often considered a form of psychotherapy, just as psychotherapy is a form of education. So corrective institutions have an educational function. Accordingly, we can expect that increasingly schools will take the place of psychiatric clinics, hospitals, and prisons.

Currently, there is some value in the careful discipline and objective detachment of the academic mind: but unless the same teachers and consultants also can exercise a subjective, emotionally involved manner of facing persons, they are certainly crippled when they come to deal with mentally retarded persons. To the academic mind, a person of low intelligence does not seem especially strange or stultified if he remains quiet at some distance from other persons and uses only his eyes or ears to pick up information. The pure academic recoils, however, when the child communicates in wordless grunts and gestures, and especially when he tries to pick up information mainly by touching, stroking, and tasting his observers.

How did this great difference come about between the academic intellectual, with his objective, inspecting attitude, and the nonintelliectual person with his subjective, embracing, and tactile attitude toward other people? I think the academic attitude bloomed in Western Europe when some of the monks in the Middle Ages began to see themselves as the conservers of written tradition. Instead of trying to develop a reservoir of folklore in the hundreds of dialects they spoke as mother tongues, the monks learned Latin as a common language. It gave them a standard, disciplined, and objective way of communicating. In developing a great reverence for the written Latin word, they detached formal thought from emotion. They also inserted a delay in human communication by cooling down and formalizing impulsive and emotionally laden thoughts before reaching conclusions and taking action.

A monk whose mother tongue was Neapolitan Italian, for example, would have a wildly thrilling Neapolitan thought. Before he could communicate it to his brother monk, whose native tongue was Cracow Polish, he would have to standardize the thought into Latin. The brother, in turn, would translate the Latin into Polish. By then, however, the thought would have lost a good deal of its impulsive freshness. The original wildly thrilling thought would have become purely intellectual.

In those days, people said that human beings were more civilized than dogs because dogs inserted no contemplative delay between impulse and action. The thought of monks was even less dog-like because it was essentially written. It became a literary intellectual activity. Peter Abelard and other monks established a faculty of literary intellectuals at the University of Paris. Their monastic rational disciplining of human thought persisted into what we call "science" and "research."

A few centuries after the founding of the University of Paris, a great catastrophe occurred to its highly disciplined way of thinking. Luther and Gutenberg de-elitized the Word by translating it into the vernacular and mass producing it. Every citizen could carry the Word of God in his pocket. Eventually, even the academics dropped Latin, and thus, lowered the objectivity and intellectualism of human thinking. At the same time, this revolution made more accountably rational the everyday thinking of common people. As masses of people became more literate in the vernaculars, they became more aloof and objective in everyday human contacts. Fewer people were stabbed or stamped on but,

also, fewer were tasted, smelled, or embraced. The retarded child, relying largely on his taste, smell, and touch, became more alienated. Instead of seeing the retarded child as an asset for manual work or as a loving family member who would not abandon them in their old age, parents saw that child as a threat to their intellectual prestige.

As the Renaissance developed, people began to disdain those adults who acted "like children," were broadly expressive emotionally, and sought a lot of body contact. Some psychotherapies in the twentieth century intensified this attitude when they sought to intellectualize life itself and to de-emphasize the senses of taste, smell, and touch in the process of healing. At the same time, they emphasized the use of hearing and sight. Whole cases were written up in literary form, as if the mere organizing and disciplining of thought into a formal, objective, and publishable account would enable future patients and therapists to solve new case problems.

This Renaissance attitude, persisting to 1974, runs into trouble when we try to train teachers and counselors in a literary intellectual manner to handle objectively, aloofly, and scientifically the life styles of diadvantaged children whose approaches to the world are overemotional, subjective, all embracing, tactile, and olfactory. The academic person is repulsed by this kind of close, embracing, irrational life style and the disadvantaged person is alienated by the literary-intellectual style.

It would not be too sad to run our whole educational system on this aloofly objective, literary intellectual method except that most teachers and counselors have a good deal of subjective human compassion. They handle disadvantaged children very well. Yet they discard all their humanist skills when they meet in a university or workshop to discuss the problems of disadvantaged children with their professional peers. The group feels that it must live a literary intellectual life for the duration of the conference. No one raises his voice. Everyone uses big words and many acronyms, which are symbols of symbols of symbols. Papers written for preservation on a library shelf are delivered to a living, breathing group in the same linear monotone that one would expect to receive from the printed book itself.

We do not use the language of the disadvantaged child nor even the eager language of the gifted child. I doubt if our academic thinking will improve our skills to deal with exceptional children or help us to teach the teachers of such children. We would only lead the teachers deeper into an intellectual morass. Teachers who are overly childish and subjective in their thinking need some literary academic training, of course, but those who have become too academic need some experience with subjective, emotional, childlike, slobbery, smelly, embraceable flesh. Furthermore, they need to lay out some of these feelings and experiences in conferences.

Jeanne McCarthy described to me a difficult case of a 6-year-old black, speechless child. Part of the solution rested on the fact that when Jeanne ate lunch with the psychologists involved in

the case they said she smelled strongly of cologne. The child, like many disadvantaged children, loved to live in a world of smell and he often doused himself with cologne; Jeanne had had so much body contact with him that she absorbed his fragrance.

If a student of special education methods were to see us in conference, he might conclude that our highest concern was academic excellence and that skill in living with disadvantaged or gifted children carried a very low prestige.

Aloof Professionalism vs Infiltrative Service

Many stage performers feel that the paying audience is really a bunch of numskulls who do not appreciate good art. ("These Washington audiences don't know how to applaud a good performance.") Doctors complain of the patients who wake them up in the middle of the night with nonemergencies. Lawyers complain of the legal stupidity of their clients. Teachers often see their students as some inferior class of ignoramuses who are poorly motivated for the education being forced upon them and poorly prepared for the classroom into which some other teacher has promoted them. Thus, it seems to me, the clientele is a sort of enemy for the average professional. Many clients are uninteresting and even threatening. The professional stands aloof on his stage and tries to remain one-up on his client I guess he feels that otherwise the client would not respect him and his superior knowledge. Students or clients who are in trouble, however, do not need a professional expert who is one-up on them. They need a friend; they need someone to sweat along with them a little. The new arena of professional work has become a modern theater-in-the-round in which the players infiltrate the audience and work beside them.

After all, education acculturates children so that in later years they can creatively acculturate the educational system. Thus, education seems to be a great mosaic, a checkerboard mixture of teacher and student, in which each learns from the other. This mosaic results in a pooling of all talents in the group, including emotional energies and personal desires. The results are more creative and, therefore, less predictable. The resulting education is of a higher order, but with no prestige gap between the professional teacher and the naive student.

If there is one model of service which is more elitist than the educational model, it is the medical model. The traditional physician is always one-up on his patient. He is not sick; his patient is. He is not ignorant of how to manage the problem; his patient is ignorant. In psychiatry, the feelings of the patient are analyzed, pigeonholed, and called transference or defense mechanisms, and so on. Up to now, patients have had no chance to analyze the very important physician's emotions in this encounter. Many educators imitate this medical model as if they wanted to be counselors or psychotherapists in the elitist manner.

The professional falls into an almost intolerable ambiguity when he tries to live with all this mosaic effect, negotiation, and business of being a friend to other professionals. On the other hand, he can obtain an absolute certainty of confidence if he follows an organized linear method of surveying (physical examination), categorizing (diagnosis), formulating objectives (treatment plan), contracting with the client (prescription), fixing accountability (holding the patient and physician responsible for the duties of each in the medial contract), and surveying the results (follow-up examination to see if the cure was lasting or if the learning has been retained).

This linear method of work, however, tends to be mechanical. It forces clients into prearranged categories. Lao Tse said, "The categories are the mothers of the 10,000 things." We begin to feel that it is illegal in our profession to think a thought that does not fit into one of the professional language categories and is easily understood by our colleagues. Accountability can be mere scapegoating. "Joe is accountable for that aspect of the problem. I don't have to worry about it. I'll only worry about my own accountability." Thus, we no longer have a mosaic but a pile of colored rocks.

Who is in Control--the Deliverer of Service or the Client?

Some consultants advocate that the deliverer of service, such as the physician or school administrator, select his clients according to his skills and interests. For example, they want a teaching hospital to select only patients who are useful for training purposes. They think that the client would suffer if the technical advisor tried to do work in which he was not interested or adequately trained. Other consultants, however, adovcate that after the client presents his peculiar problem the advisor should learn how to solve it, perhaps by collaborating with another advisor who has different skills. However, if technical advisors as a whole avoid certain types of problems that the client faces, then the profession will never learn to move into a new field which is becoming important to society. It would seem best for the advisor and the client to negotiate about the problems, each bending somewhat toward the other. If a patient or a project is nonviable, the hospital or technical advisor can help it to die gracefully.

What if the state school official resists the technical advisor, even though the schools under him desire the consultation? Well, food manufacturers had this problem when they wanted children to eat a lot of their breakfast foods. The mothers said, "I'm not going to buy that sawdust for you children to eat. Bread is better." Accordingly, the food manufacturers' advertising did not try to convince the mothers. They got baseball heroes (about whom mothers care little) to endorse the cereal and they put toys and puzzles in the bozes. So much desire was generated in the children that the mothers were forced to go out and buy the cereal. If seems to me that such extreme methods would

get us into trouble. But if we can communicate with all of our potential clients and negotiate with them and their supervising officers, together we should be able to improve education. The main goal is to avoid the orientation of an elitist hospital in which the clients have nothing to say about how they get treated because treatment is regarded as purely the province of the experts. Either you take the expert's treatment or you go elsewhere. Such an attitude can hardly lead to collaborative progress.

If your clientele is not already accustomed to your good services you cannot expect them to clamor for those services. In Illinois, for instance, we have one of the world's most talented psychologists, Nathan Azrin. About three years ago, Nate went around to the hospital wards and asked the staff if they had any problems he might help with. Of course, the staff gave the natural answer for any good institution: "Do you think we're incompetent? We handle all of our work. We don't need anybody to tell us what to do. Of course, we could use a few more hands to help us do the same things we have always had to do."

Nate said, "But I noticed this ward smelled like pee."

"Why, of course! This ward is full of profoundly retarded adults. They have peed in their pants every day of their lives. We change their pants three times a day. We are very conscientious. We take good care of our clients."

Nate said, "Mind if I work on their problems and see if I can stop them from peeing in their pants?"

"Be our guest."

Well, Nate and his staff worked on that problem for months and finally developed a way to teach a ward staff, in about a week, to get their clients to use the bathroom just like other adults. Furthermore, the ward staff needed only about three days to train the clients. After that, there would be no more smelly clothes to wash. It seems unbelievable, but that is what happened.

Were the hospitals overjoyed? The first wards to take up Nate's new training were enthusiastic. The wards smelled sweet and the staff had less work to do, since now they had only to keep reinforcing their clients properly. Nevertheless, the wards that had not yet taken up the new practice were not eager to take it up ever. Furthermore, some of the wards on which the staff had learned to think more and work less eventually decided that they would rather handle their clients in the old routine way of just changing their wet pants.

Now there is nothing abnormal about the staff's behavior. It is perfectly human. I think also that there is nothing abnormal about the people in a conference who absolutely refuse to write a paper in language as interesting as they use in ordinary conversation; in fact, it is natural for them to avoid ordinary conversation even in a living lecture. They have been trained, inadvertently, to restrain their emotions, use big words, and keep their muscles stiff.

I am sure that Nate Azrin could teach us all to change our modes of expression and to adopt the

easy-to-understand language which we all know. But the experiments indicate that we would soon relapse into our traditional ways of being unexpressive and hard to understand.

A client institution will change if the consultant begins by putting himself in the client's position, seeing the needs as the client sees them, and then changing himself along with the client institution, perhaps changing himself to something he could not have predicted. Otherwise, however high the consultant's authority and complex his skill, he is only deluding himself if he thinks he is in control of change programs when the client institution does not want to be changed.

A good consultant finds that mental health staffs have more resources than he does. He simply unswaddles those resources. He is like a Michelangelo who sees a damaged block of marble and says that a statue of David is inside that block and is waiting only for the excess stone to be chipped away so he can reveal himself.

An institution or a community usually has resources which it has avoided using or simply has not known how to develop. Consultants from Harvard Medical School, in the past three or four years, have helped to organize widows into services for other widows. No doctor, teacher, or lawyer who is not a widow can really grasp the problems and emotions that a new widow faces. Older widows, however, can offer discreet and dignified but very personal help in the most crucial period, which usually begins a month or so after the husband's death. They may even weep with their clients. Every town has widows but as a community it may not encourage them to help each other.

How would a consultant help a widow-to-widow program to emerge? He might simply meet with a group of widows and stimulate them to think about what new widows have to go through. In talking about their knowledge they would find it was shared by most other widows. For instance, when a dependable life-long male friend or the husband of her best friend suddenly seems to think that the widow needs sexual service and comes around to offer it, the widow is shocked because she does not expect such behavior. The world is upside down. Then certain salesmen come around and say, "Your husband ordered all this stuff. Where shall I put it?" She thinks it was her husband's last wish so she accepts all the expensive goods. Then there are the insurance people, the Veterans Administration, and the estate settlement: They usually hit a widow a few weeks after her husband's death when her relatives have begun to withdraw their emergency support. The widows, in their group, share such knowledge and make plans, perhaps through a church, to offer themselves graciously as helpers to the new widow. As they begin to provide such help they share their experiences and increase each other's skills. After that, they encourage the development of other widow-to-widow clubs throughout the nation. Many cities have them now.

I would think that in every school system there are many students, teachers, and administrators who have had life experiences which could make them extremely helpful in certain phases of teaching

or helping people with special problems in education. Teachers have a lot to teach each other but they need to have certain hours set aside for that purpose and they need to be encouraged to fulfill the purpose. For instance, some teachers are extremely skillful in getting small groups to concentrate on teaching themselves. Other teachers, even those supraordinate to them, could participate in the activity of the group classroom and come away with a lot of skill. The big trouble is that even more than students most teachers have to learn surreptitiously. They feel that they must not appear to be learning. Most schools also deny the existence of the greatest teaching resource of all--the fifth graders who can teach fourth graders. Little or no time is given to such teaching, either.

The New Migrant Worker

As project directors, you speak of yourselves as migrant workers because your salaries and projects depend on soft uncertain money form government grants. Your projects last only a couple of years and often they are terminated before you expect it. You seem to desire stable work in one locality so you can establish a home territory of origin, with proper provincial or sectional prejudices. You hear from the Census Bureau that the average American moves out of town every two years, and you seem to think that this statistic is skewed by all the poorly educated people who move frequently. But look around! How many of your colleagues, especially those with the higher education and prestige jobs--deans, chairpersons of departments, superintendents of schools, state commissioners of health or welfare--have remained in the same place for 10 years? Are they not all nomads? Do they not go where the new grass is greenest to feed their small families and their intellects?

I cannot see any evidence that you would enhance your personal development by clinging for 10 years to a single project in a single place. Not only do you make your contributions and then move on to a new institution, but your current project terminates itself after making a useful but short-lived contribution to the community it serves. The town, the university community, or the industrial community goes on for many decades, developing and growing as a living organism, but the "cells" of this organism--the human inhabitants and the ephemeral agencies--come and go in rapid succession.

I do not see the value, then, of your clinging to a single job in a single project for many years. It would ruin your development as well as retard the development of your institution. On the other hand, if you contribute to your present institution all the skill you have learned from your past institutions, and if you now acquire a higher experience before moving on to a new institution, then you may abet the growth of your current institution far more than if you remained there for 10 years.

Perhaps some administrators, teachers, and technical advisors could arrange for their students to teach them. Otherwise, it becomes a fearful and lonely thing to be a professional--a certified graduate, stuffed with complete authoritative knowledge in his field. He can never let others think that he needs any new knowledge.

In our school districts, we have administrators who are always being called into court unjustifiably, or we have parent groups that provide great criticism and little creative support. Perhaps the administrators, as a group, could share their knowledge about these problems, develop a helpful theory about them, and provide continuing consultation and support for each other over the years. But I doubt if they would do such a thing without consultative encouragement and help from outside the school. Educational support systems can promote these activities.

The disadvantaged children, the farmers, and the industrialists want things to belong to them but, fortunately, you who live by intellect want to belong to things--especially to institutions--which outlive you. You tend to think five years ahead for your institutions, even if your jobs have only one year to live. It seems to me that your professional group has become a tribe or a great extended family, within which you seek recognition. That is your beautiful permanent stability. Your projects and jobs come and go.

Summary of Conference

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The focus of the conference reported in this book was national support systems in the field of special education.[1] Local, state, or regional technical assistance systems were not considered although there are many such agencies. In the future, perhaps, all of the agencies will be integrated into a comprehensive support system but the possibility was not a topic of discussion. The technical assistance systems examined at the conference were individual projects funded by the U.S. Office of Education to supplement the efforts of that agency to implement the programmatic intents and purposes of Congressional enactments.

Essentially, the conference papers were a resource for the discussions among the participants. By design, large blocks of time were devoted to the exchange of ideas on the purposes and functions of technical systems, as exemplified by the projects described in the papers, and on the elicitation of general principles for the optimal development of support systems.

To the writer, it seemed that the concerns of most of the discussions, other than those relating to questions of organization and system-client relationships, could be subsumed under the 10 questions explored in the following section. As in any summary, the contents of the section are more a reflection of the conference proceedings as they filtered through the mind of the writer than of the actual scope of the discussions and the various viewpoints expressed in them. Thus, this summary should be read as a personal statement.

The Case for National Technical Assistance or Support Systems in Special Education

1. Are national technical assistance or support systems in special education really necessary?

Conference participants generally answered this question with an unqualified affirmative. The arguments supporting the position tended to center on three themes: the role of the federal government in special education; the limited, authorized activities of the USOE; and the problems of state and local education agencies in implementing Congressional and judicial mandates.

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[1]The terms "support system" and "technical assistance systems" are used interchangeably in this paper.

Increasingly, the federal government is assuming a more visible and influential role in the field of special education. Since 1957, when the Congress first provided funds for research and leadership training in the area of mental retardation, the appropriations have been increasing to include support for the improved delivery of educational services to children in virtually all categories of handicaps as well as for the operations of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped for the administration of the burgeoning programs. Other bureaus also have launched significant programs relating to specific aspects of education for the handicapped, such as career education and vocational education.

The principle of the right to education, first enunciated by the Supreme Court in Brown vs. Board of Education (347 U.S. 483, 1954), has been extended to handicapped children by the federal court cases of the 1970s and expanded to include education in the least restrictive environment and due process. These principles will unquestionably be recognized in any future Congressional special education legislation. Congress and the courts expect their mandates to be acted on expeditiously and to the letter, but they make little provisions for assistance which may be needed to implement their mandates while they hold accountable the persons who are responsible for the implementation.

When the USOE is charged with administering the provisions of legislation passed by the Congress, its role can be likened to that of a middleman in that it is accountable to Congress for implementing the intent of the legislation but must consign the actual implementation to other authorities. A charge from Congress often means that the USOE must negotiate the implementation of the charge with state and local school systems, institutions of higher education, and other agencies on a very rapid schedule and with high concern for accountability. Yet the agency is limited in staff and other resources and in the power to participate actively in the implementation.

Like other federal agencies that administer funds, the USOE makes many of its awards for program development on a competitive basis for a limited period; the renewal of the awards are dependent on success/failure evaluations. The attitude engendered among program developers, consequently, is a compound of reclusion, uncertainty, and reluctance to admit the existence of problems. In sum, the method of funding discourages the broad sharing of program developers' experiences and expertise to meet the high goals of federal legislation, and it encourages the program developers to adhere to a meticulous observation of procedural rules and regulations, rather than to orient clearly to Congressional intent.

Perhaps because the problems of program development appear to become more complex with time or because the agencies funding the programs are necessarily concerned with their accountability to Congress, there appears to be an inclination for federal awards to be made first to the most

promising development centers or, even, to those program directors who write the most promising applications for funds. The practice can be justified, of course, on the grounds that awards made to program developers with little experience or readiness to undertake the responsibilities are more likely to lead to failure unless the program can be given a great deal of assistance. The USOE, needless to say, has neither the authorization nor the resources to provide such assistance directly. The result of this funding pattern and of inadequate support resources is, of course, that resources go where resources are already most adequate rather than where the needs are greatest.

The launching of federal programs with too little provision for technical assistance also creates a great danger of a high degree of noncompliance among program developers. Aside from the fact that noncompliance may be judged simply to be resistance to or disregard for federal laws and may lead to judicial penalities, an accumulation of noncompliance cases can have the perverse effect of destroying public confidence in the intent of the relevant law. Indeed, noncompliance may be interpreted not as the result of the program developers' incompetence but as evidence that the law authorizing the program is unworkable. An even more troublesome domain is created when court decisions require rapid change in special education programs, but virtually no resources and technical assistance are rallied to the scene.

The experiences of the technical assistance projects described and discussed in the conference papers comprise strong evidence for the practical value of support systems. In the programs served by the technical assistance projects, compliance is relatively assured; program developers are less afraid to admit the existence of problems with which they need assistance; cooperation among programs and the sharing of experiences and expertise increase the efficiency of each program; and the intent of the legislation authorizing the programs is more fully implemented. Because of the technical assistance projects, the USOE is able to fund programs in needy geographic areas where the available expertise is minimal, and in other areas where the restraining of personnel has a high priority. In other words, the USOE is able, through the technical assistance projects, to maintain its posture as a funding and regulating agency with accountability in the best sense of the term.

In his reactions to the conference, Dr. Bertness of the Tacoma, Washington, public schools outlined the tremendous difficulties local school systems are facing in trying to achieve the goals set by Congress, and he concluded, "Of course we need national support systems. Where have you been?"

2. Should the support system be outside the government?

In general, the answer to this question was a qualified yes, for the reason that most federal agencies are not equipped to provide sufficient direct technical assistance. Most such agencies are so limited in staff and resources and so burdened by their administrative responsibilities

that, usually, they can attend to the developmental aspects of congressionally mandated programs only rudimentarily. Because the Congress tends to distrust a large, permanent bureaucracy, professional personnel are kept at a minimal level in federal agencies. Given that the primary functions of these personnel are to establish policy and management systems and to make discretionary funding decisions, honest helping relationships between the agency personnel and their clients are very difficult to establish. As a result, federal officers who attempt to combine the two roles may not be able to fulfill either adequately.

Other issues are complicated by the personal needs of agency professional staffs for recognition. When federal agency employees resist the development of technical assistance systems through non-governmental organizations, it may be because they fear their image will be diminished. Providers of technical assistance usually are seen as "good guys" who provide processes for successful program achievement; consequently, agency personnel fear that they will be viewed as "bad guys" because they are required to make tough, monitoring-type decisions and to offer little help but lots of governmental regulations. During the conference, Gallagher commented on this issue, in part, as follows: ". . .there is bound to be some feeling of resentment when agency people have to take final responsibility for quality control and other people receive gratitude for the help they deliver."

However unfortunate it may be, it is extremely difficult for government employees to relate to projects simultaneously as monitors and helpers. And because they are monitors, it is difficult for them to receive honest feedback from their constituencies which can be used to negotiate additional programs with higher administrators or the Congress. The lack of feedback is especially noticeable when federal goals are high, emphasis upon innovation is strong, agency staffing is minimal, and funds are granted on a discretionary basis for short terms with frequent (annual) renewal required. This context breeds developmental programs in which honesty may be equated with self-destruction and funding renewal may become a more important goal than the implementation of Congressional intent. The gap between projected program goals and actual achievement can be bridged by strong nongovernmental support systems, however.

The difficulties of federal agencies in providing assistance to widely scattered field projects is greatly increased, of course, when spasmodic freezes are placed upon travel funds, staff replacements, consultation budgets, and similar items that are essential to project service. The fact is that, in the past decade, such difficulties have been the rule rather than the exception.

When support systems are erected outside the government hierarchy, they are not subject to the stresses and strains that beset governmental agencies. Thus, the systems can act as buffers to protect fledgling projects from the occasional excesses of agency impatience, and they can rally the understanding and endorsement of agency personnel for programs that must develop slowly and carefully

for the best results. But the systems can perform such functions only if they are trusted by the governmental agencies and trust the agencies in turn.

Again and again, during the conference discussions, the participants explored the establishment and maintenance of trust between support systems outside the government and funding agencies in the government organizational hierarchy. When trust is not present, as when a support system and an agency each views the other as a competitive power elite, then the demise of the outside system is inevitable. Trust implies the existence of mutually respected and enhancing linkages between the support system and agency personnel that permit honest discussions and equal participation in joint planning. When trust exists between the outside support system and the governmental agency, the technical assistants can also generate trust in the program personnel needing their services and between these personnel and the funding agency. One of the major components of such trust is the mutual respect of professional equals. Several technical assistance programs now in existence demonstrate that trust between support systems and agencies, and between funded projects and the two organizations, is not only plausible but productive.

Granted that support systems external to the government have value, then the question arises of what kind of organization should operate the systems. Many organizations, undoubtedly, have the capabilities to function as support systems in particular areas of need. No one organization, whether a university, professional association, private firm, or local, regional or state education agency can be said to be best for all support functions, however. Therefore, in envisaging a national support system for special education, a network of many different kinds of organizations providing various kinds of supports to meet the variety of needs is necessary. Such a network might parallel the national support system in agriculture, for example, although, at least for a time, it may be best not to establish relatively permanent centers for such assistance.

3. How can support systems function vigorously and accountably?

Although the question as such was never made explicit during the conference, a concern for its implications was voiced in some of the discussions. The following attempt to deal with the pertinent issues should be read as a largely personal expression of the manner in which support systems can maintain the delivery of high-quality technical assistance without becoming moribund or self-serving.

For the near future, at least, any organization engaged in supplying technical assistance should operate on a "soft" basis, that is, as a temporary structure funded for a specific purpose for a limited period of time. Although a technical assistance system must be established in a center, such as a university, which can provide essential personnel and resources, the association should be regarded as an expedient rather than a permanent affiliation. Unless the arrangements are temporary,

directors of support or technical assistance centers may be tempted to use the programs as power bases for self-aggrandizement within the institution or in broader professional domains, or, possibly, for the establishment of a specialized corporate entity. This condition leads to competition among programs among the host institutions and possibly between the host agency and the counterpart agency in government.

The solution is for technical assistance centers to consider themselves part of a national endeavor, that is, to minimize local identification by cooperating with each other and by being ready to see the operations transferred to other centers when the move would further the attainment of objectives. For example, a technical assistance system might be located at a given university or other agency for a limited period, such as three to five years, and then moved for a comparable period to another site where direction and leadership would be assumed by different persons chosen for their unique abilities to be useful at that time. The funding federal agency might be guided in the selection of sites by an advisory group of leaders in the particular field.

In addition to its goal of providing technical assistance to individual projects, I believe that every "soft" support system should include the goal of developing support capabilities in organizations that are the traditional and permanent sources of assistance for educational personnel, such as state departments of education. In a sense, this means that ad hoc technical agencies should be working themselves out of a job by seeking to strengthen the existing structures of the field, and to avoid creating a continuing position in the bureaucracy for themselves. The point is that the support system should not become another permanent layer in an already overly complex bureaucracy; instead, it should be "soft," temporary, totally oriented to a single mission, and ready to fold its tent.

Virtually all the participants at the conference were interested in support system staffing problems as an aspect of the systems' vitality. In some technical assistance projects, for example, competent personnel are not easily retained because of the complexities and uncertainties of the federal funding. The solution appears to be for support systems to operate with skeleton regular staffs and to call in consultants and advisors as they are needed for specific assignments in the various geographic or problem areas.

Minimal organizational staffing exemplifies a distal as opposed to a proximal pattern (see the paper by Stedman). It has the great advantage of increasing the flexibility of a support system by preventing the establishment of a rigid organizational hierarchy, minimizing the natural tendency of such hierarchies to become internally oriented and self-serving, and avoiding the tendency of self-serving hierarchies to try to dominate their rivals through what may be destructive competition. Most important, perhaps, such a staffing pattern permits the employment of consultants who

can bring a variety of points of view to the effort.

A difficult question centers on the nacure of the staff to be employed by a technical assistance center. In some instances, it may be appropriate to employ staff members who are well versed in organizational change and development procedures; they would, in turn, call in highly specialized consultants as necessary. In other instances, the front-line staff might well be subject-matter specialists. The critical factors determining the choice of staff expertise are, among others, the stage of the field's development and the client projects' predominant concerns.

A good many other facets of system vitality doubtless will need attention. The emphasis here has been on keeping the technical assistance center on "soft" funds and staffed in a distal form.

4. Who sets the agenda for a support system and what is a proper agenda?

One kind of agenda, its most general form, is found in programs launched by Congressional action: The legislation specifies the program goals and the federal agency that will administer the designated programs, and, sometimes it authorizes the establishment or employment of an external support system to implement the agency's efforts. More detailed kinds of agenda may be written by either a federal funding or technical assistance agency or both.

In any case, if the business of the technical assistance agency is preset in much detail by federal agencies or the technical assistance agency, it is likely to be considered high-handed by many project level consumers. Local education agencies do not like to be told in detail the kinds of help they need or the kinds of activities they should engage in. They resist efforts to foist on them a single set of materials and procedures developed in one center, not because of the center itself but because of the limits imposed on them by the concentration on a single point of view.

Organizations in the process of change are especially sensitive to the imposition of outside agendas because they are anxious to demonstrate their own creative capacities. Thus, technical assistance personnel are challenged to find, through negotiations with local education agencies, a compatible balance between the mission and authorizations they carry from the federal government and the autonomy of the local agencies.

There is no doubt that sometimes the federal government is guilty of excesses. Indeed, the federal agencies are sometimes accused of maintaining a "big pipe organ in the sky" attitude, that is, of expecting local agencies to dance to federal tunes and to change their rhythm and steps whenever new organ stops are pulled. Yet, excesses are found among local agencies also. Sometimes, local agencies and their community advisers feel no compunction in applying for federal funds for a stated purpose and then using the funds to implement another purpose, regardless of the Congressional intent in legislating the funds. Whenever the federal government or a local agency is guilty of excesses, technical assistance systems are caught in the middle of a delicate situation that may even have moral implications.

One conferee posited a situation in which a local project requests technical assistance on design for a retraining project, but the technical assistance consultant quickly discovers that the local agency's primary problem is the inadequate selection of personnel in the first instance. Should the technical assistance consultant proceed with the retraining project as requested? Or should he report out his analysis of the agency's personnel difficulties, thus trying to change the agenda?

Whenever an agenda must be formulated, it would seem reasonable to suggest that everyone who will be affected should have a voice in setting it. Since local agencies usually tend to be quite certain that they know their problems and have presuppositions on how they should be handled, it is especially important that these agencies participate in setting the agenda for the technical assistance systems that come in to help them.

But what does a technical assistance consultant do when he believes that the local officials have misjudged their problem and assistance needs? As a local user of technical assistance, Dr. Bertness offered the following plea:

> When somebody comes in to see me, perhaps I have something that I would like that person to help me with. However, if he sees that I am off target, I would appreciate it if he would first help me with the problem that I see. He should have the understanding to start working there. Then I would hope that our relationship would be such that, given a little time, he will level with me, in a supportive way, tell me that I am off target, and then proceed into some of the technical assistance that is needed right now. These are very elementary matters but they are profoundly effective, when they are practiced with care.

Assistance that is personalized and responsive to local needs can be extremely reinforcing for all the participants. Technical assistance systems have the complicated task of developing the means of reinforcing local personnel who have assumed the burden of leading the difficult change processes mandated by the goals of federal programs, yet simultaneously communicating the basic goals of the legislation involved and the essential requirements of the administering federal agency.

It is not unusual, also, for technical assistance systems to discover items for an agenda, which no one had suspected earlier, only when they have been working with several local projects. An example, cited by a conferee, was the effect of administrative decentralization of city school systems (a trend starting in the early 1970s) on low-incidence special education programs which, traditionally, have been highly centralized operations. As this problem, an unexpected one for the technical assistance system, emerged, it seemed useful to organize administrator training and some limited publication activities around some of the theory and research related to the decentralization of organizations. Such an experience, of course, is further support for the need for a flexible but client-centered approach to the agenda problem.

5. Who should be clients for supportive services?

Two points of view dominate the attempts to answer this question. First, when the Congress funds a set of projects through an agency to implement the intent of legislation, the technical assistance project should direct its efforts to assisting the leaders of these projects. For example, if 40 project grants and one technical assistance grant are made in "learning disabilities," the technical assistance system according to this point of view should serve the 40 project directors. Assistance might go to other staff members besides the directors, of course, but only in conjunction with plans negotiated with the directors.

A second point of view is that when the Congress funds a set of projects through an agency to implement the intent of legislation, the grants are made to sites where new procedures can be developed, demonstrated, and later disseminated. In this framework, each funded project is responsible for organizing its results in a form that can be disseminated easily and efficiently. The technical assistance system funded along with the projects should be concerned with the totality of the program mission as it is expressed in immediate project needs, and the system should be concerned with the preparations for dissemination from the very beginning. The sense of mission and the target are larger from the beginning in this point of view.

In the first point of view, the term "client" is defined as the 40 project directors; in the second, the term is defined as the program under which the projects have been funded. Although a strategy calling for the limited definition is safe, it is also atomistic, and the more open definition, while molar in concept, may incorporate some danger that the technical assistance representatives will neglect the parts and ultimately, impair the totality or the totality simply will become impossibly amorphous and unmanageable.

Ideally, of course, technical assistance systems will incorporate the best features of both conceptions of the client: Their representatives will establish the projects and directors as the immediate targets and the program mission as the ultimate one. For them to function in this way, however, technical assistance personnel should negotiate the definition of their clients at the very outset with federal agency personnel.

6. How structured should support services be?

At the conference, the descriptions of what were considered good technical assistance procedures ranged from formally negotiated, temporally restricted, and specifically targeted procedures to unstructured, almost casual associations with clients. In some technical assistance agencies, services are restricted almost totally to training or consultation; in others, the services include travel support for site visits, literature reviews and summaries, acting as the project advocate in negotiating difficult local situations, funding a specialized staff person for a period, reviewing and restructuring job descriptions when needed, and comparably broad-ranging activities.

Perhaps it goes without saying that no technical assistance system should ever try to dominate its clients. A project staff must always have the primary role in the work, both as innovators and administrators. Should the outside technical assistance representatives try to assume direction of the project and relegate the project personnel to the role of carrying out their orders, then the whole support process has gone awry.

There is no denying the fact that different experts have different styles or preferred modes of supplying technical assistance and the objects of the technical assistance also differ in their preferences for how assistance is provided. Additionally, the stage of a technical assistance program may indicate the need for different approaches: It is more difficult to be precise and adhere to a strict assistance time-table in the early stages of a program, when the unexpected is the rule, than later on when procedures have become somewhat formalized and relationships are clear and predictable. With structure real and apparent in the operations of a project, agendas can be clarified and adhered to; formal needs assessments followed by specific contracted technical assistance becomes a possibility.

But not all technical assistance need be so strictly structured. For example, at some stages a technical assistance representative may provide only minimal support to specific projects on the grounds that his major efforts should be given to organizing broader dissemination projects, including conferences, publications, and the revision of basic training programs in the relevant field. Given the fundamental character of some of the changes now required of schools in relation to serving the needs of exceptional children, some technical assistance obviously should focus on broad, fundamental changes. In this context, the specific projects are seen as but "samples" of situations in which, ultimately, attention must be given to the topic at hand; and the technical assistance agency keeps at least "half an eye" on the larger target.

There is an indication that some of the changes induced by recent shifts in public policy, such as explicating the right to education of all children, even the most profoundly handicapped, have created an epidemic-like situation. A court decision directed to a local school district may bring on a feverish flurry of compliance activity which, as in a bacterial epidemic, requires certain forms of technical assistance on the spot. As in any epidemic, while currative treatment is needed in the center of the stricken area, a different form of assistance is needed on the periphery--perhaps innoculations--and, at the same time, a third form of assistance--research into how epidemics can be prevented from occurring--must be undertaken as rapidly as possible. The field of special education can be said to be currently suffering from the effects of strong judicial decisions, and epidemics are breaking out. The argument advanced here is that technical assistance needs to be channeled to all levels, which implies variety in the structure of technical assistance agencies.

Although the provision of technical assistance to individual projects is essential and cannot be neglected, the support systems supplying that assistance should be part of a more comprehensive effort to bring adaptations to all of education. As in agriculture, a national support system in education should function at many levels and for many purposes simultaneously.

7. How should technical assistance agencies be coordinated?

The USOE Bureau of Education Personnel Development (BEPD), under the leadership of Don Davies, probably established the first major set of technical assistance or support systems in education when it funded 12 leadership training institute projects in 1968, each related to a BEPD categorical program. Since then, other bureaus in the USOE have subscribed to the value of support systems by funding projects to provide technical assistance to, for example, school systems that are trying to increase their capabilities to accommodate handicapped children in regular classrooms, teacher-training projects in the field of learning disabilities, and states that are planning programs for gifted children. However, the projects that provide such technical assistance have not been coordinated to comprise a formal total system; rather, they have come into being on an ad hoc basis for a specific purpose and they have a finite existence.

The field of special education probably has more ad hoc technical assistance projects in operation than any other field of education. Nevertheless, the conference reported here may have been the first time that a group of support system representatives were brought together to describe their technical assistance activities and exchange ideas. From the discussions, it was apparent that technical assistance professionals need to become more self-conscious about their work; they need to begin to think about the procedures which are used to establish technical assistance projects and, equally, the channels through which communication and collaboration among such projects may be achieved. No clear views on these matters were expressed except for the proposal that another conference on technical assistance be convened at a future date with more federal agency officers and consumer representatives in attendance. It is hoped that the publication of these proceedings will provide some stimulus to the more concerted and self-conscious examination of technical assistance needs in special educaiton.

In pursuing the topic of fully coordinated technical assistance systems, there are some precedents which can be observed. The concept of technical assistance or support systems created and funded by a federal agency to provide needed services upon demand has a long history in the federal government in relation to agriculture, commerce, and industry. In agriculture, for example, a vast network of people and services spreads out from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to state governments, universities, research and experimental stations, and counties to provide farmers and their families with virtually free technical assistance in all aspects of agriculture and farm living. This

network is the best and most complete example in the public sector of a long-standing support system.

An example of a more limited technical assistance system supported by the federal government is the Early Clinical Drug Evaluation Units which are funded by the National Institutes of Health. The purpose of the Units in this system is to evaluate the treatment effectiveness and safety of new psycho-active drugs developed by private drug manufacturers; the data derived from the evaluative studies are used by manufacturers and the Food and Drug Administration to determine whether a new drug should be included in the U.S. Pharmacopeia.

A more radical example might possibly be recovered from military history, or in the systematic technical assistance offered to communities devastated by war. Documentation of these efforts is not readily at hand, but fascinating reports are available occasionally about the mammoth effort made in Japan just after World War II.

The topic of training personnel to function as technical assistants surfaced repeatedly during the conference. Without restricting their views to the kinds of technical assistance that were represented at the conference, the discussants generally agreed that technical assistance components should be included in the preparation of all special education leaders. Since all competent professionals are called upon at some time to offer the best of their experiences and skills to other people in other settings, they should learn to share their expertise more effectively. Providing technical assistance requires consultative attitudes and skills as well as substantive skills and insights. Few training programs do more than touch on the topic, yet the increasing use of technical assistance indicates that the subject is worthy of far more attention.

9. Evaluation.

Another frequently noted but little clarified topic raised at the conference was evaluation, that is, the objective evaluation of technical assistance or supportive services. It is a territory rife with and ripe for testimonials and self-serving puffery but short on persuasive procedures and outcomes which can be evaluated.

The suggestion was made that one purpose of national technical assistance projects is to reproduce themselves in smaller versions; the image was of a large technical assistance project spawning state and local technical assistance mini-projects which would carry on their work directly in the schools. In some programs, such a development may be appropriate; for example, it may be appropriate for a national technical assistance system, such as an instructional materials center for the handicapped, to count off its offspring at state and local levels as "progress," but for technical assistance systems in other programs the recognition and identification of legitimate offspring may be more difficult. Here, again, is a high priority topic for continuing attention.

10. What should be the support base for national support systems?

Most of the technical assistance projects represented at the conference were funded by the USOE or some other HEW agency. It was not at all certain that the funding agencies had a clear view of the technical assistance activities they were supporting. Indeed, although the federal agencies are beset with massive problems of technical assistance, information dissemination, and knowledge utilization, it appears, in general, that they have not yet developed a clear conception of how much of these problems they should try to handle out of their offices or how much support they should provide technical assistance projects, like the ones represented at the conference, to resolve the problems externally. The conference participants expressed much uncertainty and some anxiety about the likelihood of continuing federal supports for their efforts. Thus, the question looms of who should and/or will support national technical assistance projects in education. The uncertainty may possibly arise out of a special problem: If and when a technical assistance project becomes very strong, it may, in a sense, "rock the boat" and evoke negative reactions from its funding agency as well as other agencies that feel the waves.

Among the optional sources of support for technical assistance projects, there were mentioned the Council of State Governments; regional agencies, such as SREB or WISCHE; private agencies and foundations; and universities or consortiums of universities that organize to develop strong service in a particular specialty area; another suggestion was that the recognition of the value of technical assistance might stimulate grassroots personnel or consumers to develop methods of buying technical assistance from whatever source seems to offer the best service.

Although no clear answer to the question of funding was reached at the conference, nevertheless it appears likely that more than a few agencies are working toward new forms of support systems as an alternative to the uncertain and sometimes limiting support which the federal government can provide.

From a personal viewpoint, it seems obvious that agencies concerned with programs for exceptional children should move even more strongly than they have in the past to create ad hoc support systems as an essential aspect of the expanding federal role in education. It is unthinkable that the federal government should continue to exert a strong and highly categorical presence in education mainly on the basis of regulatory mechanisms and its power to make discretionary decisions, and fail to give technical help in its special fields of endeavor. There is a great need to foster a federal presence in the search for human and organizational development which is necessary to achieve the magnificent goals posited for exceptional children. Federal agencies will be able to achieve their full partnership in the developmental tasks before us only by calling to their aid the skills and interests of technical assistance professionals who are widely scattered, and placing a significant part of the work into the hands of ad hoc technical assistance centers.

Until we come up with something better, we should at least proceed to develop technical systems in forms that were glimpsed by the contributors to this volume and their colleagues.